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ABSTRACT

Twenty self-contained lessons about land and freedom feature activities that can be used with high school social studies classes. The lessons are: Indian Land Ownership, The Dutch and the New World, Colonial Mercantilism, the Declaration and Natural Rights, Jefferson and Liberty, Louisiana Purchase, the Tariff Issue of 1824, Panic of 1837, John Jacob Astor--America's Wealthiest Man, the Antirent Riots in New York State, Irish Immigration, the Mexican Cessions, Railroad Land Grants, Homestead Act, Forty Acres and a Mule, Imperialism in Central America, the Closing of the Frontier, the Reform Period and Henry George, Roosevelt--the Deficit and the New Deal, and Land--Our National Heritage. Each lesson includes a theme, a sub-theme, background, concepts, performance objectives, and related texts. (DB)

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Land and Freedom

[Twenty Lessons for High School American Studies Classroom Instruction]

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SO 021 153

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LAND AND FREEDOM

1. INDIAN LAND OWNERSHIP

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Throughout our history, both the American and Indian cultures have come into conflict.

Sub-theme: In the area of land ownership, the European heritage, from the beginning, has been different from that of the Indians.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- common ownership
- individual ownership
- treaties
- culture
- land tenure

Performance objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare opposing points of view on Indians' rights to land
- evaluate how Hollywood has dealt with the image of Indians
- write several paragraphs analyzing treatment of Indians

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison Wesley, ch. 17
- Building of the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 31, 37
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 16
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 6, 9
- Rise of the American Nation, Harcourt Brace, ch. 7
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 1, 7

Because today's world demands a better grasp of economics for all, these lessons are published in the public interest by the Henry George School, in cooperation with the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation.

Henry George was an economist and philosopher whose land reform ideas have been adopted in many parts of Australia and New Zealand, as well as in Pennsylvania's major cities, including Pittsburgh. Land is a gift of nature, according to George, needed by all and to be shared by all, not by just a few.

The Henry George School, a non-profit academic institution, was founded in 1932 and chartered by the State University of New York. Besides its headquarters in New York, the School has affiliates in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Long Island, Boston, Chicago and the Dominican Republic, and state coordinators in over eight states.

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INDIAN LAND OWNERSHIP

During the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries, European monarchs encouraged and subsidized expeditions to the New World. None were more active nor made greater impact than the English under the Tudors and the Stuarts.

Discoveries were made in the name of the sovereign and all lands belonged to the monarch, to be disposed of at the will of the crown. Joint stock companies received charters form the crown and parcelled out land but always at the behest of the sovereign. Royal favorites also received territories to be parcelled out as they saw fit. In all cases, lands discovered and distributed had been territory occupied for centuries by various Indian tribes whose cultures included ideas quite different form the English concept of individual ownership of land.

Long before the first European settlers came to America, Indians had developed an advanced economy, having passed from a nomadic food gathering economy to one of food producing. Hunting and fishing were an integral part of their lives, affording a livelihood for all members of a tribe. Indian culture and religion were enmeshed with nature, for they felt themselves entwined with the universe. Mother Earth and Father Sky were more than expressions; they represented the Indians' very being. Without nature, there was no life, for nature was not something denied to one and granted to others. Land, a part of the universe, belonged to all, particularly the tribe. Individual land ownership did not exist, since all were entitled to the fruits of nature. Separation from the land was incomprehensible to them, for all land was held in common ownership.

Inevitably, as settlements grew and the desire for further expansion increased, the cultures of these native Americans and of Europeans came into conflict. Treaty after treaty relocated the Indians, moving them farther west and robbing them of their habitat. Corrupt and devious means were used to compel them to forfeit their lands. In many cases, the Indians had little idea of what the settlers meant in denying them access to their lands. No match for their power, the Indians were eventually relocated and limited to an area of only 200,000 square miles, in a continent of 3,600,000 square miles which they had once wholly occupied.

What Indians found was that American promises, in many cases, were empty. By the time they realized this, however, they had lost a nation. The Northwest Ordinances of 1787 stated:

> The utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians; their land and property shall never be taken from them without their consent, and in their property rights and liberty, they shall never be invaded or disturbed, unless and in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress.

Honorable sentiments these seemed, but they were violated on countless occasions.

Despite all the promises, a clash of cultures was inevitable, and accommodation impossible, for Indian values and those of the Americans in regard to land tenure were in opposition. Chief Tecumseh of the Shawnee tribe summed it up when he claimed:

> . . . the way, the only way to stop the evil is for the red men to unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land, as it was at first, and should be now—for it was never divided, but belongs to all. No tribe has the right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers. Sell a country! Why not sell the air, the great sea, as well as the earth?

Did the Indians have greater insight into the ownership of land than did the Europeans?

INDIAN LAND OWNERSHIP

Activity 1 – Adams vs. Marshall – Contrasting Views

Many in this country believed that taking red men's land and putting it under white civilization would serve a higher human purpose. Echoing this point of view was John Quincy Adams, President of the United States:

> What is the right of a huntsman to the forest of a thousand miles over which he has accidentally ranged in quest of prey? . . Shall the lordly savage not only disdain the virtues and enjoyments of civilization himself, but shall he con.rol the civilization of a world?

John Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, expressed a different point of view, in a case dealing with the Cherokee Nation and the state of Georgia:

> The Cherokee Nation . . . is a distinct community, occupying its own territory, with boundaries accurately described . . . and which the citizens of Georgia have no right to enter, but with the assent of the Cherokees themselves, or in conformity with treaties, and with the acts of Congress.

These represent two opposing views on how to deal with the Indian questions, particularly land rights. Please answer the following questions:

1. How valid is the argument of Adams?
2. How would you define savage and civilization?
3. From what you have studied, what would have happened if Adams's view had not prevailed?
4. How valid is the argument of Marshall?
5. If we had had to gain the consent of the Cherokee and other Indian tribes, could we have settled this nation as we did?
6. What have been the various methods in this country of determining rights to the land?

Activity 2 – Hollywood's Version

Hollywood has been producing westerns for years, and one of the themes in many of these films has been the relationship of Americans to American Indians. Have the students list several films they have seen (movies or television) concerning Indians. Ask them to write a brief summary of their reaction to each. Then place titles of the films on the board and discuss reactions to Hollywood's portrayal of the roles of Indians. As summary, ask the following questions:

1. Was the encounter between the Indians and the later Americans peaceful or warlike?
2. How were Indians portrayed, as contrasted with depictions of other Americans?
3. To what degree was Indian culture emphasized?
4. How accurate was each depiction of Indian behavior or culture?

Activity 3 – Comparing Words and Actions

In 1787, the Northwest Ordinances were issued, declaring:

> The utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians; their land and property shall never be taken from them without their consent, and in their property rights and liberty, they shall never be invaded or distrubed, unless and in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress.

Place this statement on the board, or read it to the class. Have students write a brief reaction to the Ordinances in their first paragraph, emphasizing to what degree we have observed them. In the second paragraph, students should describe how the United States has tried to help Indians.

LAND AND FREEDOM

2. THE DUTCH AND THE NEW WORLD

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Many European nations sent explorers to the New World.

Sub-Theme: The Dutch attempted to encourage emigration to the New World with their patroon system.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
patroon
trading corporation
Quit rent
feudalism
landed aristocracy

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
analyze an original document encouraging emigration
research concepts and terms dealing with colonial land systems
write an essay expressing an opinion on reasons for emigration

Related Texts:
American Experience, Addison Wesley, ch.1
A History of the United States, Ginn, ch.1
The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 2
Building the United States, Harcourt, Brace, ch. 5
Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 1, 2
A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 1

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THE DUTCH AND THE NEW WORLD

During the two centuries following the discovery of America, European nations sponsored numerous explorations in search of the elusive Northwest Passage to the Far East. The English, Spanish, French, Italians and Dutch all participated in this great adventure. It was in this historical setting that an Englishman, under the auspices of a Dutch trading company, sought such a route to India.

Sailing into the harbor now bearing his name, Henry Hudson, in 1609, ushered in an era which placed Holland, along with England, as a major colonizer in the New World. From the mouth of the Delaware south, to the mouth of the Connecticut north, and inland along the Hudson River to Albany, Dutch settlers planted their roots. This cultural infusion has left its mark on that entire territory, especially New York State.

Since Captain Hudson was in the employ of the Dutch East India Company—a trading corporation—the discovery was made in their behalf. As was the custom, the corporation requested a charter from the Estates General, Holland's legislative body, granting them a monopoly to explore and trade in that area between the 40th and 45th parallels. Right of ownership, as claimed by Europeans, was based upon discovery—European discovery—of any lands, regardless of occupancy.

After this initial charter expired, it was not renewed, but re-issued to the West India Company, beginning a 50-year period of occupation and emigration. With almost unlimited power, this company tried all means to make this venture profitable. The primary purpose was not colonization but rather the promotion of their fur trade. In order to facilitate this process, settlers were transported here beginning in 1623—the first being 30 Walloon families.

Settlement progressed at a snail's pace since the Dutch were reluctant to leave their homeland. Having enjoyed elements of democratic living and the freedom to practice their religion with minimal interference, there was scant desire to relocate across the ocean. Therefore, in an effort to encourage emigration, the Estates General issued the "Charter of Freedom and Exemption".

From among many of its large stockholders, the charter created patroons who were designated as large landholders within the jurisdiction of the corporation. The company allocated to these patroons large estates in consideration for their transporting 50 families to the territory under their jurisdiction. Each patroon was granted exclusive ownership indefinitely, of a tract of land 16 miles along a navigable river, or eight miles on either side. They were also granted civil and criminal jurisdictional powers, thus perpetuating vestiges of medieval feudalism.

Besides controlling the judicial process, the patroon exercised power over many aspects of the settlers' lives. He received a tenth of all grains, fruits and other products raised, obtained a rent of $200 a year and received from the occupants of the estates services including quit rent. The patroon did not sell land but granted it by lease, to be held so long as the rent was paid. Some of the land was leased for the income from one-third to one-half of the produce. Improved leased land—that on which buildings had been erected—was turned over to the patroon when the lease expired.

The attempt to perpetuate feudalism along the Hudson failed. There were, however, some spectacular exceptions. Van Rensselaer, one of the largest stockholders, controlled lands which comprise present-day Albany, Rensselaer and Columbia counties. The Van Cortlandt manor comprised 85,000 acres, the Livingston manor consisted of 160,000 acres and there were sizable Pelham and Scarsdale estates.

Although the patroon method failed, it nevertheless transplanted a system of landed aristocracy, with all its embellishments of feudalism. Even after the Dutch overthrow, the English did not interfere with the system of land tenure implanted by the Dutch. It would be several centuries later, in the 1840's, when the anti-rent riots would ravage eastern New York State. But that is another chapter in the history of land monopolization.

THE DUTCH AND THE NEW WORLD

Activity 1 – Analyzing A Document

In 1629, in order to encourage emigration to the New Netherlands, the Dutch government issued a "Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions To Patroons." Below are excerpts from this charter. Although some of the terms may seem strange, keep in mind that it was written over 350 years ago.

CHARTER OF FREEDOMS AND EXEMPTIONS TO PATROONS

III. All such shall be acknowledged Patroons of New Netherland who shall, within the space of four years next after they have given notice to any of the Chambers of the Company here, or to the Commander or Council there, undertake to plant a Colonie there of fifty souls, upwards of fifteen years old; one-fourth part within one year, and within three years after the sending of the first, making together four years, the remainder, to the full number of fifty persons . . . ; but it is to be observed that the Company reserve the Island of the Manhattes to themselves.

IV. They shall, from the time they make known the situation of the places where they propose to settle Colonies, have the preference to all others of the absolute property of such lands as they have there chosen; but in case the situation should not afterwards please them, or they should have been mistaken as to the quality of the land, they may, after remonstrating concerning the same to the Commander and Council there, be at liberty to choose another place.

V. The Patroons, by virtue of their power, shall and may be permitted, at such places as they shall settle their Colonies, to extend their limits four leagues along the shore, that is, on one side of a navigable river, or two leagues on each side of a river, and so far into the country as the situation of the occupiers will permit; provided and conditioned that the Company keep to themselves the lands lying and remaining between the limits of Colonies, to dispose thereof, when and at such time as they shall think proper, in such manner that no person shall be allowed to come within seven or eight leagues of them without their consent, unless the situation of the land thereabout be such that the Commander and Council, for good reasons, should order otherwise. . . .

VI. They shall forever possess and enjoy all the lands lying within the aforesaid limits, together with the fruits, rights, minerals, rivers and fountains thereof; as also the chief command and lower jurisdictions, fishing, fowling and grinding, to the exclusion of all others, to be holden from the Company as a perpetual inheritance, without it ever devolving again to the Company, and in case it should devolve, to be redeemed and repossessed with twenty guilders per Colonie, to be paid to this Company, at the Chamber here or to their Commander there, within a year and six weeks after the same occurs, each at the Chamber where he originally sailed from; and further, no person or persons whatsoever shall be privileged to fish and hunt but the Patroons and such as they shall permit. And in case any one should in time prosper so much as to found one or more cities, he shall have power and authority to establish officers and magistrates there, and to make use of the title of his Colonie, according to his pleasure and to the quality of the persons. . . .

XV. It shall be also free for the aforesaid Patroons to traffic and trade along the coast of New Netherland and places circumjacent, with such goods as are consumed there, and receive in return for them all sorts of merchandise that may be had there, except beavers, otters, minks, and all sorts of peltry, which trade the Company reserve to themselves. But the same shall be permitted at such places where the Company have no factories, conditioned that such traders shall be obliged to bring all the peltry they can procure to the Island of Manhattes, in case it may be, at any rate, practicable, and there deliver to the Director, to be by him shipped hither with the ships and goods; or, if they should come here without going there, then to give notice thereof to the Company, that a proper account thereof may be taken, in order that they may pay to the Company one guilder for each merchantable beaver and otter skin; the property, risk and all other charges remaining on account of the Patroons or owners.

XVIII. The Company promises the colonists of the Patroons that they shall be free from customs, taxes, excise, imposts or any other contributions for the space of ten years; and after the expiration of the said ten years, at the highest, such customs as the goods pay here for the present. . . .

XXIX. The Colonists shall not be permitted to make any woolen, linen or cotton cloth, nor weave any other stuffs there, on pain of being banished, and as perjurers, to be arbitrarily punished.

XXX. The Company will use their endeavors to supply the colonists with as many Blacks as they conveniently can, on the conditions hereafter to be made, in such manner, however, that they shall not be bound to do it for a longer time than they shall think proper.

After having read this document, please answer the following questions:

1. Why do you think the charter required the patroon to bring not fewer than 50 people to the New World?
2. What do you think some of the obstacles were in encouraging people to come here?
3. What evidence is there in the charter that not much was known of the quality of land in various parts of the Hudson River valley?
4. What control was the patroon to have over all future cities?
5. What restrictions were placed upon trade and upon manufacturing in the areas granted to the patroons?
6. Clause XVIII grants the patroons specific benefits. Do we grant any benefits to any groups to encourage them to perform certain acts?
7. What does the charter show concerning the 17th century attitude toward Black slavery?

THE DUTCH IN THE NEW WORLD

Activity 2 – Researching the Colonial Land System

Before the Europeans came to the New World, it was inhabitated by Indians. Having a different concept of land ownership form the Europeans, the Indians did not realize, at the beginning, that their views towards land would eventually cause their displacement.

To understand how various areas came under control of Europeans, reasarch the following terms and relate them to the development of land ownership:

Head right system
Viginia Company
Dutch West India Company
Proprietary
Plymouth Company
Quit rent system
Absentee ownership
Patroon system
Freeholder
Commons

After the class has researched the above terms and compared notes with each other, have them answer the following questions:

How and where would each of the following have been likely to come into possession of land in the New World?

1. A man with sufficient wealth and influence to become a proprietor.
2. The proprietor's friend with a wife and two children, but little money.
3. An indentured servant with his term of indenture completed.
4. A member of a church congregation settling a new area.

Activity 3 – Expressing an Opinion

History is filled with evaluations, interpretations, and changes as we obtain new information. After having digested these evaluations, at some point, an opinion may be warranted. Read the following interpretation concerning reasons why Europeans migrated to this country:

An insight into the cause of the distressing poverty and man's inhumanity to man in Europe clearly shows that poverty emanated from feudal landlordism, and this being stabilized as it was, relief was possible only through emigration. America offered the only escape.

I believe it will be recognized that during more than two centuries the compelling cause of the mass movement of people seeking homes in the savage-infested wilderness of America was the desire for material betterment of themselves and their children through access to land.

This is the opinion of one author. Do you agree or disagree with him, based upon your study of American and European history?

Now, write a short essay dealing with what you feel is the major reason as to why immigrants came to this country. In writing this essay, break it into two paragraphs, the first dealing with an example of a specific group and why they came here. In the second paragraph, state your opinion and ideas as to why this motive influenced many groups.

LAND AND FREEDOM

3. COLONIAL MERCANTILISM

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major texbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N. Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Thema: Colonies, during the 16th and 17th centuries, became important to the British Empire.

Sub-theme: The American colonies existed for the benefit of Great Britain.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- mercantilism
- favorable balance of trade
- Navigation Acts
- enumerated articles
- raw materials

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare two contrasting viewpoints on the merits of mercantilism
- distinguish fact from opinion
- enact typical behavior of varied groups during the mercantile period

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 2
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 3
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 2
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 22
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 4
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 5

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The foundation, a non-profit publisher, was incorporated in 1925 to help abolish poverty by keeping George's books in print and by disseminating his ideas. Books, pamphlets, and films by other authors are also published. In addition, the foundation helps finance the American Journal of Economics and Sociology and supports university and other group programs.

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COLONIAL MERCANTILISM

Even before the first boatload of Englishmen landed at Jamestown, Virginia, European countries had experimented with empire building, engaging in the system of mercantilism. Although it never had a cohesive nature, changing from nation to nation, its variations had similar characteristics and, most important, a shared economic philosophy. First and foremost was state control over human beings and human action, regulating various aspects of a nation's economy. And with the acquisition of colonies came recognition that their purpose was to satisfy the needs of the mother country. Within this context, economic activities centered around the accumulation of wealth for the European power, at the expense of the colony. The degree of control varied according to the nation. Spain and Portugal, during the 1500's, exerted strict control over their colonial inhabitants. However, this was not the case with the British and their relations with the 13 colonies.

For the first 150 years after the initial settlement at Plymouth in Massachusetts, English control over the colonies was at a minimum. What with all her involvement with European nations in wars of conquest, little energy or time was available to dictate economic policy to the colonies. Three thousand miles of ocean separating colonies from mother country made more difficult the means to monitor such a policy. As the colonies grew and became more prosperous, the English realized that the colonies could provide increased trade, if competition could be eliminated. Americans had established profitable trade with other countries, notably the Dutch. In order to increase her wealth, Britain tightened the economic noose around the neck of the colonies by implementing particular regulatory policies, thus changing in degree her relationship with the colonies.

From 1650 on, England instituted a series of laws of trade and navigation known as the Navigation Acts. Their purpose was to limit colonial trade to the British only. In order to accomplish this, all trade between colonists and the British was to be conducted on either English vessels or colonial-built vessels. If colonists intended to trade with any other nations, all goods had first to be shipped to England, giving her an opportunity to handle them and collect revenue from taxation. In addition, there were certain products that could be traded only with Britain, such as tobacco, sugar and cotton. As time went on, the list of such enumerated goods grew, thus continually decreasing merchandise that the colonists could sell to other nations.

As part of the overall workings of mercantilism, colonists specialized in the production of raw materials, sending them to England, where the raw goods were converted to products which were then shipped back to the colonies, providing the British with a profitable market, free from competition. In order to discourage manufacturing, regulations governed certain industries that would have been competitive with the British, such as the woolen industry, hatmaking, and the iron industry. Meeting domestic needs was permissible, but many of the regulations were intended to prevent export.

Even though many of these restrictions were on the books, having become law, they did not cause havoc to the colonists, as was the case with the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. In fact, there were many advantages that the colonists received from this system. Lack of administrative enforcement was often an aid to British colonial industry.

With the culmination of the French and Indian War in 1763, the British were victors in the world struggle for commercial supremacy and their policies of mercantilism changed. Now they began to enforce policies, which led to intensified animosity between the English and their colonies.

Having tasted semi-economic independence for too long a period, the American colonists had no desire to return to the mercantilistic policies endured by the colonies of other European nations.

COLONIAL MERCANTILISM

Activity 1 – Two Contrasting Views on Mercantilism

Mercantilism, a doctrine of many meanings, had numerous supporters during the 16th to 18th centuries. No matter what the variations, it required a powerful government – one that would regulate economic affairs. One of the ardent supporters of this system was Thomas Mun:

> Although a kingdom may be enriched by gifts received, or by purchases taken from some other nations, yet these things are uncertain and of small consideration when they happen. The ordinary means therefore to increase our wealth and treasure is by foreign trade, where we must observe this rule: to sell more to strangers yearly than we consume of theirs in value.

Adam Smith, a critic of mercantilism, felt that this system had confused the very purpose of an economic system:

> Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer. The maxim is so perfectly self-evident, that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it. But in the mercantile system, the interest of the consumer is almost constantly sacrificed to that of the producer, and it seems to consider production, and not consumption, as the ultimate end and object of all industry and commerce.

After reading both of the above selections, please answer the following:

1. In your own words, what is Thomas Mun stating?

2. What is the main idea of Adam Smith?

3. What would be the ultimate, in the Mun scheme?

4. What would be the ultimate, according to Adam Smith?

5. According to Mun and the mercantilists, how can a nation increase its wealth by shipping out more than it receives?

6. How do you think that Smith would define wealth?

7. What actions today are taken to promote the interest of the consumer?
   Of the manufacturer?

COLONIAL MERCANTILISM

Activity 2 – Separating Fact from Opinion

A fact is something that has happened or is true. It can be proven. An opinion is something that a person believes to be true. An opinion cannot be proved to be true.

Below are statements concerning the mercantile period. For each, please state whether it is fact or opinion.

1. A nation should export more than it imports. _____
2. England passed the Navigation Acts to monopolize trade with the colonists. _____
3. Under the system of mercantilism, a favorable balance of trade meant exporting more than one imported. _____
4. Enumerated commodities were goods that the colonists could ship only to England. _____
5. During this period, colonists existed for the benefit of the mother country. _____
6. Had the colonists taken a vote during the 17th century, they would have been against the mercantilist system. _____
7. Only England, and not the colonists, gained from this system. _____
8. Smuggling is an example of colonist resistance to British regulations. _____
9. It was immoral for the colonists to engage in smuggling. _____
10. Manufacturing was restricted in the colonies prior to the American Revolution. _____

Activity 3 – Role Playing Events of the Mercantile Period

After the students have studied the mercantile period and are familiar with the pros and cons of this system, divide the class into six groups, each group representing a segment of colonial society in the period prior to 1763. The groups are as follows:

a. a New York manufacturer starting in the business of making clothing

b. a sailor working on a ship

c. a New England producer of tar and pitch, ingredients necessary for ships

d. a tobacco farmer in Virginia

e. a colonist elected to his colony's legislative body

f. a shipbuilder in New England

Assign an equal number of students to each group. Based upon their roles, ask each group what their attitude would have been towards the system of mercantilism. Appoint one student from each group to take notes on the various arguments given and then to report to the class the consensus of the group.

LAND AND FREEDOM

4. THE DECLARATION AND NATURAL RIGHTS

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Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: British reaction to demands of American colonists led to our Declaration of Independence.

Sub-theme: Natural rights was the philosophical argument used to justify our independence.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- natural rights
- Declaration of Independence
- life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness
- institutions
- abuses and usurpations

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare opposing points of view on natural rights
- analyze the essential concepts of the Declaration of Independence
- write an essay reacting to the Declaration from the British viewpoint

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 2
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 24
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 4
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 4
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 5
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 7

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THE DECLARATION AND NATURAL RIGHTS

From the early 1600's, when the New World was settled by the British, until several years before the Declaration of Independence, few colonists desired to sever relations with their mother country. However, with the culmination of the French and Indian War, attitudes changed, both on the part of the colonists and of Great Britain. After fighting had broken out in 1775, the aroma of independence permeated the colonial air.

Having received authorization from the Constitutional Congress to put into writing what, in fact, had already begun, a committee was formed to document the reasons for the break from Great Britain. It was not meant to be a document directed at one country, but, rather, a message to the world. And thus a small group of revolutionaries pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.

With the formation of the committee of five—Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman and Robert Livingston—the stage was set for a historical drama having few equals. Accepting responsibility for the first draft, Thomas Jefferson documented, for all mankind, the colonists' reasons for breaking the umbilical cord. Enmeshed in the enlightened ideas of that period, Jefferson expressed the prevailing sentiments of the colonists—a belief in the natural rights of man. In succinct language, these principles were enunciated in the second paragraph—often quoted:

> "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. . ."

That the Declaration of Independence recognized the existence of unalienable rights ran counter to prevailing views of government throughout the world at that time. According to the concept of natural rights, there are rights not dependent upon law or institutions (political)—rights that have their origin in the substance of humanity itself. Although only three of these rights are mentioned in the Declaration, there are more, according to philosophers and political scientists, some of which are expounded in these lessons.

In proclaiming the first of these natural rights—the right to life itself—the Declaration asserts that basic right to security from forces which inhibit one's self-preservation. The right to liberty guarantees the proper conditions or circumstances favorable to carrying out in action the choices made. The pursuit of happiness refers to the help organized society gives to make a good life possible. This represents a set of principles for all ages.

As Jefferson commented on the essence of the Declaration, he was echoing thoughts expressed during an earlier century. During the 17th century, John Locke, who influenced Jefferson more than any other philosopher did, wrote:

> The state of nature has a law of Nature to govern it, which obliges every one, and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions.

Contained in the Declaration is the essence of American democracy—ideas that were transferred to the Constitution a decade later—and ideals that became the basis for many subsequent amendments.

Yet, although the concept of natural rights was an integral part of the Declaration and the Constitution, there have been and currently are many governments that adhere to the ideology that all rights are the result of benign governments—to be dissolved as the situation may warrant. Our forefathers felt that natural rights emerged as a precondition for government, which was formed in order to secure and protect the pre-existing rights of individuals.

Do the ideals of the Declaration of Independence still ring forth today? Or was historian Carl Becker accurate when he commented, "What seems but common sense in one age often seems but nonsense in another."?

THE DECLARATION AND NATURAL RIGHTS

Activity 1 – Two Divergent Views on Natural Rights

Approximately one century after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, socialist literature espoused the denial of natural rights, supplanting them with the doctrine that all power rests within the State. Laurence Gronlund expresses the prevailing socialist view in The Co-operative Commonwealth:

> It (the conception of the State as an organism), together with the modern doctrine of evolution as applied to all organisms, deals a mortal blow to the theory of "Man's natural rights, the theory of man's inalienable right to life, liberty, property, happiness, etc. . ." These so-called natural rights and an equally fictitious "law of nature" were invented by Jean Jacques Rousseau. Philosophic socialism repudiates that theory of natural rights. It is society, organized society, the State, that gives us all the rights we have. . . As against the State, the organized Society, even Labor does not give us a particle of title to what our hands and brain produce.

Henry George, in Social Problems, denies the concept that natural rights do not exist:

> These natural rights, this higher law, form the only true and sure basis for social organization. Just as, if we would construct a successful machine, we must conform to physical laws, such as the law of gravitation, the law of combustion, the law of expansion, etc., just as, if we would maintain bodily health we must conform to the laws of physiology, so, if we would have a peaceful and healthy social state—we must conform our institutions to the great moral laws—laws to which we are absolutely subject. . . when we find social disease and political evils may we infer that in the organization of society moral law has been defied and the natural rights of man have been ignored.

After reading both of the above statements, please answer the following questions:

1. Can it be proven whether "natural rights" exist?
2. What is meant by natural rights?
3. Besides those mentioned in the Declaration, do we have any other natural rights? What are they?
4. John Locke included in these rights "property." Was he correct?
5. Why does there seem to be less emphasis on these rights today than 200 years ago?
6. With which of the above readings are you more in agreement? Why?
7. Was Henry George correct in stating that there is a higher law than those made by people?

THE DECLARATION AND NATURAL RIGHTS

Activity 2 – Analyzing the Declaration of Independence

Divide the class into three sections, each section responsible for reading one part of the Declaration. The first section reads up through the part ending, "for their future security." The second group begins with, "Such has been the patient" and ends after "in peace, friends." The third section completes the reading.

After they have read their assigned sections, mix the groups up so that each contains students who have read all three parts. Then have them answer the following questions yes or no.

_____ 1. The colonists declare that there is a higher law than that of the king.

_____ 2. Governments are created by an agreement between God and kings.

_____ 3. The colonists were very critical of their legislative body, Parliament.

_____ 4. Governments should be changed only when there is a history of abuses and despotism.

_____ 5. England imposed taxes on the colonists with their consent.

_____ 6. The colonies are to be free and independent.

_____ 7. The king has not responded to the demands and grievances of the colonists.

_____ 8. All people have certain basic rights that no leader can take away.

_____ 9. The Declaration of Independence was directed exclusively at the king of England.

_____ 10. The people who will be ruled by a government should be represented in it.

Activity 3 – England's Reaction to the Declaration of Independence

When fighting began in April, 1775, there were few voices in the 13 colonies urging independence from England. Prior to the outbreak of war, most colonists seemed to have enjoyed the benefits which the British bestowed upon them. Yet, within a matter of months, public opinion had shifted, as witnessed by this important document.

With this in mind, have the class divide into four sections to rewrite the Declaration from the English point of view, stressing some of the following areas:

Group 1 – General statement why the colonists are not justified in separation
("When in the . . . to the separation.")

Group 2 – British view on natural rights (per John Locke) and their constitutional history (Magna Carta, Petition of Rights, Bill of Rights, etc.)
("We hold these . . . their future security.")

Group 3 – A list of benefits that the British government bestowed upon the colonists: protection, few taxes, a market for goods, and economic prosperity
("Such has been . . . and conditions.")

Group 4 – The evolution of British democracy in contrast to despotism around the world
("In every stage . . . our sacred honor.")

Within each group, choose one student to write a summary of the ideas stated by its members. After all four groups have put their comments in writing, have one student rewrite the Declaration, excluding any duplication, and then have this copy duplicated for all students in the class.

LAND AND FREEDOM — 5. JEFFERSON AND LIBERTY

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Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N. Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: A major theme in American history has been the quest for liberty.

Sub-theme: Thomas Jefferson represents one of the strongest voices espousing the merits of liberty.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- religious freedom
- individualism
- laissez-faire
- Jeffersonian philosophy
- Bill of Rights

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- draw conclusions from a selection read
- express an opinion on the limits of liberty
- analyze the Bill of Rights

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 3
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 30
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 8
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 11
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 7
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 11

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JEFFERSON AND LIBERTY

On his tombstone are inscribed the words, "Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom and Father of the University of Virginia."

This inscription bears testimony to the beliefs of Thomas Jefferson. Entwined in his accomplishments is the heart of the Jeffersonian philosophy—an emphasis upon the human quality and the adherence to individual liberty. His faith in the human spirit, free from the shackles of government interference, echoes throughout his writings.

It is Jefferson who stands out among the founding fathers as one dedicated to the twin democratic principles of liberty and equality. It was no accident that he, among a distinguished committee of five, was designated to write the draft of the Declaration of Independence, in which he expressed his feelings. For Jefferson, unlike others of his time, who questioned the ability of the majority, had confidence in the majority and its will. To create an atmosphere in which individuals could pursue happiness was his major endeavor. Any factors which interfered with individual choice -war, tyranny, bigotry, ignorance, slavery, oppression—were repugnant to Jefferson. As Secretary of State during the Washington administration, he collided with Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of Treasury, and eventually resigned. From Jefferson's view, human nature and liberty were at variance with the tone of the first United States administration.

Liberty, to Jefferson, was equated with the absence of an all-powerful government. In his eyes government was to serve as a negative force, not by doing good, but by creating conditions in which individuals could flourish by their own means, as he indicates here:

> A wise and frugal government which shall restrain men from injuring one another, which shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government.

This laissez-faire attitude permeated his philosophy of freedom. Throughout his years in Washington's Cabinet, he was uncomfortable with Hamilton's fiscal policies. Hamilton's emphasis upon the business community, the bankers and the eventual growth of industry and cities, was contrary to Jefferson's belief in the farmer as the backbone of the economy. His distrust of city life, with its destructive seeds, was part and parcel of his disagreements with Hamilton. It was the latter, according to Jefferson, who represented a return to monarchy and the aristocratic way of life.

Having spent years in Paris before the French Revolution, Jefferson had seen that every Frenchman was either a hammer or an anvil. No freedom, no happiness and no human spirit was the lot of most of the population. It was in this setting that he viewed their revolution and was sympathetic to their plight, thus bringing him into conflict with those who feared the masses and the possibility of anarchy.

Several years before the French Revolution, when armed clashes were taking place in Massachusetts between farmers, led by Daniel Shay, and government forces, Jefferson refused to be alarmed.

> The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions that I wish it to be always kept alive. It will often be exercised when wrong, but better so than not to be exercised at all. I like a little rebellion now and then. It is like a storm in the atmosphere."

Sentiments one would not expect from a future president.

When Jefferson finally did become president in 1801, it marked this nation's first bloodless revolution. With his ascendancy to the highest office in the land, Jefferson brought with him special values that have become a hallmark in our democratic atmosphere. Whether outdated or not, he has become the symbol of the principles of equality and liberty.

JEFFERSON AND LIBERTY

Activity 1 – Reading an Interpretation of Liberty and Drawing Conclusions

Noted social philosopher and economist Henry George had the following to write concerning liberty:

We honor Liberty in name and in form. We set up her statues and sound her praises. But we have not fully trusted her. And with our growth so grow her demands. She will have no half-service!

Liberty! It is a word to conjure with, not to vex the air in empty boastings. For Liberty means Justice, and Justice is the natural law—the law of health and symmetry and strength, of fraternity and co-operation.

They who look upon Liberty as having accomplished her mission when she has abolished hereditary privileges and given men the ballot, who think of her as having no further relations to the everyday affairs of life, have not seen her real grandeur. . .

We speak of Liberty as one thing, and of virtue, wealth, knowledge, invention, national strength and national independence as other things. But of all these Liberty is the source, the mother, the necessary condition. . . Where Liberty rises, there virtue grows, wealth increases, knowledge expands, invention multiplies human powers. . . Where Liberty sinks, there virtue fades, wealth diminishes, knowledge is forgotten, invention ceases, and empires once mighty in arms and arts become a helpless prey to freer barbarians. . .

Shall we not trust her?

Liberty calls to us again. We must follow her further; we must trust her fully. Either we must wholly accept her or she will not stay. . . Either this, or Liberty withdraws her light! Either this, or darkness comes on and the very forces that progress has evolved turn to powers that work destruction. This is the universal law.

After you have read the selection, please answer the following questions:

1. Give some examples where we sound the praises of liberty and set up statues in her name.
2. How accurate is Henry George in what is stated in paragraph four?
3. In what ways does liberty call us again?
4. According to the reading, what do you think is the author's definition of liberty?
5. After having discussed Jefferson and his concepts of liberty, how do you think it compares with that of George?
6. In what ways do we not trust liberty?
7. How would Alexander Hamilton probably have reacted to the above selection? Why?

JEFFERSON AND LIBERTY

Activity 2 – Espressing An Opinion

Many issues dealing with liberty and freedom are not always clear cut, as Americans have had to balance these ideals with the good of society. In this exercise, your opinion on certain issues is requested.

The line below represents a continuum between total control and absolute liberty. Read each of the following problems and decide whether your answer would be for total control, absolute liberty, or something between those two points. Place the letter preceding the problem at the appropriate place on the line.

Total Control _____ Absolute Liberty

a. A newspaper has received from another country information very damaging to the United State. Should the newspaper be allowed to print this information?

b. An American wishes to travel to a communist country but the State Department refused to grant a passport. Should the Department have power in this matter?

c. The Board of Education removes several books from the school library because members of the Board believe the books to be anti-semitic and anti-black. What degree of control should they have?

d. A pro-Nazi group wants permission to march in an all-Jewish neighborhood. Should they be permitted to march?

e. In order for someone to get certain jobs, it is necessary to join a union. Should a union have the power to prevent someone from gaining employment?

f. A qualified teacher, who is a racist, applies for a position. Should there be laws preventing racists from teaching?

After placing the letters where you think each belongs on the continuum, please also answer the following questions:

1. In which cases do you want more information? Be specific.
2. What are the issues raised in each of the above?
3. What are the arguments you used to support your opinion?

Activity 3 – Analyzing an Important Doctrine: The Bill of Rights

Thomas Jefferson was one of the strong voices, along with Tom Paine, who felt that a Bill of Rights had to be amended to the Constitution. Once the Constitution was ratified by the necessary number of states, the first ten amendments were added—the Bill of Rights.

Below are several issues that relate directly to the Bill of Rights. With the use of a copy of the Constitution, tell which amendment relates to each topic below.

1. An individual refuses to salute the American flag, on religious grounds.
2. A policeman stops a car and starts searching it for stolen weapons.
3. An individual, accused of robbing a store, is let out on bail.
4. A person is jailed but not told what the charges against him are.
5. A newspaper is prevented from printing a story critical of the President.
6. An individual on trial is forced to take the stand and testify against himself.
7. A hunter has, in his home, several rifles used only for hunting.
8. A murder is committed and the person accused is tried in a regular jury trial without having gone to a grand jury.
9. A member of a minority party is prevented from making a speech.
10. A suspected murderer was tried by a jury and declared innocent. New evidence has come to light and he is tried again.

LAND AND FREEDOM — 6. LOUISIANA PURCHASE

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Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N. Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Jefferson's presidency marked a change in government and policy for the United States.

Sub-theme: The purchase of the Louisiana Territory represented a doubling of our territory.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- strict interpretation of Constitution
- commerce
- New World
- national domain
- title

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare two opposing views on the right to land
- research information from an atlas concerning the Louisiana Territory
- analyze a letter for historical information and attitudes

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 3
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 30
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 8
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 8
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 8
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LOUISIANA PURCHASE

As the 19th (this nation's first) century began, all was not peaceful, and tranquillity reigned neither domestically nor internationally. Within the country, there occurred a change in political parties. Jefferson emerged as the new president, with a philosophy of government different from that of Washington and Adams. Internationally, Napoleon gained power, Europe was thrown into the throes of a series of wars, and the United States debated its possible involvement. It was in this setting that the largest and most lucrative real estate deal in our history occurred.

Not only was Napoleon Bonaparte embroiling Europe in the horrors of war, but his appetite had extended to the New World. He viewed the Western Hemisphere as ripe for conquest and settlement. Thomas Jefferson, an advocate of peace and a firm believer in the Constitution, fully recognized the political implications for this country of the closing of the port of New Orleans (a part of the Louisiana Territory, owned by France) to American traders. This outlet was of vital importance to the American western population. Its closing would have catastrophic effects, similar to the halt of commerce in the port of Boston by the British prior to the American Revolution.

When information revealed that France had gained control of the Louisiana Territory from Spain in 1800 and that the right of transit of New Orleans had been withdrawn, Jefferson recognized the dire economic results. He instructed James Monroe and Robert Livingston to purchase New Orleans and West Florida from the French government. To their astonishment and amazement, Napoleon offered to sell the entire territory, from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains, for approximately $15 million. At little more than three cents an acre, this tract of land—700,000 acres—was a bargain not easily refused. Although they lacked authority to negotiate on such a vast scale, the American representatives agreed to Napoleon's offer. Any delay could mean a change of mind for Napoleon.

The final sale was legally consummated, with the approval of the United States Senate, through a treaty. As to the legality of the transaction, there was vagueness. Napoleon, according to the French constitution, could not dispose of national territory without a vote of approval of the legislative body, and that was not forthcoming. Furthermore, Napoleon had previously promised Spain that this territory would never be disposed of to a third party. Finally, according to Jefferson and the advocates of a strict interpretation of the document, the treaty was unconstitutional because power to increase the national domain by treaty is not stated in the Constitution of the United States.

It was not, however, in the constitutionality that problems arose, but in the ownership of the Louisiana territory. According to the purchase agreement in 1803, the inhabitants were given "all rights, advantages and immunities of citizens"—and in the meantime were protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and religion. All land titles and land grants recognized by the Spanish and French received recognition in the territory.

Settlement in the territory by Americans, prior to the purchase, was granted by Spanish officials. In many cases it was verbal permission. Squatters' rights, not recognized by our government, added fuel to an outraged western population. Furthermore, since Spanish and French titles were recognized prior to French acquisition in 1800, a new phenomenon in land manipulation evolved—antedating. This referred to a practice of predating claims before 1800, when the area was under Spanish control, so that the claims would be recognized by the United States government. So prevalent was this practice that a commission was mandated to investigate the validity of these Louisiana land titles. Congress and the courts were inundated with claims concerning land titles for decades following. Adding to the confusion was the practice of subdividing and selling these smaller tracts to others. The discovery of fraud led to the invalidation of many Louisiana land titles.

LOUISIANA PURCHASE

Activity 1 – Contrasting Views on the Right to Land

Right of ownership differs greatly between Indians and European immigrants. Several years after the Louisiana Purchase, Tecumseh, a powerful Shawnee leader, said the land belonged to everyone:

> Until lately there was no white man on this continent; it then all belonged to red men. . . The way—and the only way—to check and stop this evil is for all the red men to unite in claiming a common equal right in land.
>
> The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because they had it first. It is theirs. They may sell it, but all must join. Any sale not made by all is not valid. . . All red men have equal rights to the unoccupied land. It belongs to the first who sits down on his blanket or skins which he has thrown upon the ground, and till he leaves it no other has a right.

In the case of the Louisiana Territory, discovery by Europeans, as well as agreement to treaties, represented the right to land. After having received this territory from Spain through a treaty, Napoleon now wished to sell it to the United States:

> Irresolution and deliberation are no longer in season. I renounce Louisiana. It is not only New Orleans that I will cede. It is the whole colony without any reservation. I renounce it with the greatest regret. I direct you to negotiate this affair with the envoys of the United States. Have an interview this very day with Mr. Livingston. . . For a century France and Spain have been putting out for improvements in Louisiana, for which its trade has never repaid them. . . I want fifty million francs.

After reading both views on the right to land, please answer these questions:

1. What is the basis of ownership, according to Tecumseh?
2. How valid is his claim to ownership?
3. Based upon the second selection, what inference can you make concerning Napoleon's claim to Louisiana?
4. How valid is his claim to ownership?
5. Is there any way that the differences between the Indians and the settlers could have been reconciled?
6. Why do you believe that Napoleon wished to sell this piece of real estate?
7. Why was the United States so anxious to buy this territory?

LOUISIANA PURCHASE

Activity 2 – Using the Atlas as a Reference Book

Students ought to become familiar with the atlas–a book containing maps. These maps depict the earth in a variety of ways–political demarcations, economic features, type of products, land features and other traits.

With the use of an atlas, introduce the students to the index in the back of the book. For example, a city or town would appear as follows:

Barre, Washington, Vt. 10,387 C4 218

The index entry above represents the city, county, state, population, map index key and page number. In the case of rivers, however, only the key and page number are listed.

After students have studied the location of the Louisiana Territory in their text books, have them list the states within the Territory. Then, using an atlas, they should locate the following rivers and list at least two important cities along each river:

Mississippi River
Arkansas River
Yellowstone River
Red River
Missouri River

Activity 3 – Analyzing a Historical Document for Information and Attitudes

After the purchase of the Lousiana Territory, President Jefferson, in order to know more about the area that was now part of the United States, sent Lewis and Clark to explore this vast piece of real estate. Here are the instructions he wrote to Meriwether Lewis:

> The object of your mission is to explore the Missouri and other rivers to find the best water routes across the continent. . .
>
> Get well acquainted with the people you meet. Learn all you can of their languages, jobs, food, clothes. Find out what diseases they have and their remedies for them. Learn about their laws, customs, and how they get along with other peoples. . .
>
> Pay special attention to the following:
>
> > The soil and the lay of the land
> >
> > Fruits, vegetables, and animals, especially those not already known in the United States
> >
> > Minerals, metals and volcanic appearances
> >
> > Climate. Keep a record of temperatures, the number of rainy, cloudy and clear days. Notice the dates when flowers begin to bloom or trees lose their leaves. Keep a record of when birds, reptiles and insects appear.
>
> Treat all the people you meet in a friendly, peaceful manner. Let them know the United States wants to be neighborly, friendly, and useful to them. Let them know we want to trade with them. . .
>
> Take some cow pox with you. Encourage the Indians to use that medicine to prevent smallpox. Be sure to do this where you spend the winter, to protect your Indian hosts.

Now please answer the following questions:

1. What are the reasons for Lewis and Clark undertaking this journey?
2. What appears to be the general attitude of President Jefferson to strangers?
3. How does his attitude concerning Indians differ from those of other presidents you have studied?
4. Why was Jefferson concerned with vegetation, climate, and the like?
5. If you were president, and you were sending a letter to several astronauts scheduled to land on Mars, what type of information would you request?

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Theme: Tariffs have been used as both a source of revenue and a protection for industry.

Sub-theme: The tariff of 1824 illustrated the sectional division within the United States.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- protective tariff
- revenue tariff
- sectionalism
- imports and exports
- dumping

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare opposing views on the need for tariffs
- interview people of opposing views
- analyze a chart on United States tariff rates

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 5
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 38
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 9
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 9
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THE TARIFF ISSUE OF 1824

Henry Clay, part of the senatorial triumvirate that included Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun, represented the voice and interest of the emerging west. At the heart of his political and economic philosophy was the American system—a method of bringing together the several sections of the nation. A proponent of protective tariffs, to encourage domestic industries, he urged that the proceeds from such revenue be used to establish a network of internal improvements. These two proposals, along with the continuance of the Bank of the United States, would, he claimed, help unify the states. It was with the issue of tariffs, however, that the debate took on sectional proportions—a debate that not only focused on specific problems, but, equally important, dealt with a panoramic view of this tax.

In 1789, our first year under the new Constitution, Congress passed the first tariff, primarily for revenue purposes. Forbidden by the Constitution to tax exports—goods leaving the United States—Congress had power to tax imports—goods entering this nation. As other taxes became more popular, the need for revenue tariffs diminished, but as a means of protection, they gained importance.

Because of a sectional depression in the early 1820's, tariffs became the dominant issue. Manufacturers, along with workers and farmers, favored such a tax. Agricultural prices had nose dived; wheat growers in Pennsylvania and sheep ranchers in Ohio ceased their activities. Industrial workers lost jobs as textile and iron works factories closed. As these conditions prevailed, the Tariff Act of 1824 was passed, imposing duties on items not previously included and raising rates from 25 to 37 per cent of the value of imported goods. To a greater degree than in previous tariffs, this one restricted more goods on the basis of protection than of revenue.

As an advocate for the protective tariff, Senator Clay expressed a view that applied to the 1820's, but which has been propounded throughout history. To encourage home industry, he claimed, it was necessary to keep out foreign goods that competed with domestic industries. Unloading their warehouses after the War of 1812, the British had been dumping goods in the American market below their cost, causing the shutdown of many factories. Only a tariff, claimed the Senator, could protect American workers and factories:

> The sole object of the tariff is to tax the produce of foreign industry, with the view of promoting American industry. The tax is exclusively levelled at the foreign industry. That is the avowed and the direct purpose of the tariff.

Recognizing that sections of this nation were witnessing an economic depression, Senator Webster refused to concede that it was the result of imports. Instead he attributed it to a worldwide decline in prices. Moving from the specifics of the situation to the general, Webster argued that prosperity is dependent upon foreign trade. Tariffs, of course, would curtail international trade, he explained, and thus impair American prosperity. Goods are improved because they are needed, he argued, and if such goods can be obtained elsewhere, it is to the nation's benefit. Let cheap labor outside this country produce goods more cheaply than inside it; American labor could then turn to more useful endeavors:

> Labor in this country is independent and proud. It has not to ask the patronage of capital, but capital solicits the aid of labor. . . The mere capacity to labor in common agricultural employments gives to our young men the assurance of independence. . . The true inquiry is, can we produce the article in a useful state at the same cost, or nearly the same cost. . . at which we can import it?

It was but a short time later, after the great tariff debate had subsided, that other issues would gnaw at the very fabric of this nation. The tariff issue was but a portent of a nation seriously divided and sectionalized.

THE TARIFF ISSUE OF 1824

Activity 1 – Contrasting Views on Tariffs

Although the issues of this tariff were initially debated at a local level, they later covered broader areas. Thomas Dew, an economist of the period, spoke out against the principles of tariffs:

> The vigilant eye of government is not required to watch over any of the departments of industry. Man is governed by interests. His interest will generally prompt him into that employment, where all the advantages taken together are greatest; or in other words, that employment which is most profitable to him. And that will, generally speaking, be the most profitable, whose products are not in sufficient abundance for the demand. It is thus clear, that every individual will prosper most, when his exertions are properly directed by an enlightened self-interest, guided by the principle just stated; and the wants of society, so far as they can be supplied, will be effectually supplied in this manner. Where. . . is the need for the interference of government? It must be a blind director. It cannot produce a better employment of the labor and capital of an individual, than he or his friends can choose.

Another leading economist of that period, Daniel Raymond, defends the principles of tariffs:

> A measure of government may interfere with the private interests of an individual, or a class of individuals; but if at the same time, it promotes in a greater degree, the interests of a larger class of individuals, it will be beneficial to the nation, and will promote national wealth. National wealth is the effect of national industry. If you would increase the effect, you must add new force and power to the cause. A most effectual method to do this, is to give to national industry a monopoly of the home market.

Now that you've read opposing views, please answer these questions:

1. How valid is Thomas Dew's position?
2. How valid is Daniel Raymond's position?
3. To what degree do tariffs protect jobs in this country?
4. When tariffs are instituted, does the nation as a whole prosper?
5. Should we have tariffs to protect those industries that are involved in our national defense?
6. How are the interests of the consumer affected by tariffs?
7. If other nations have high tariffs on our goods, should we retaliate by placing high tariffs on their goods? Why?

Activity 2 – "Meet the Experts" Television Interview on Tariffs

Hold a "Meet the Experts" panel discussion comparable to "Meet the Press." However, rather than only one expert being interviewed, the three experts will include Senators Daniel Webster, representing New England interests; Henry Clay, representing the views of the West; and John C. Calhoun, speaking for the South. Three students, playing the roles of reporters, will ask the questions. Each is employed by a different newspaper—the Southern Gazette, the New England Times, and the Western Bulletin. Another student serves as moderator, to maintain decorum and allow all senators and reporters a fair chance to ask and answer questions. The rest of the class—the audience—is asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the participants and then to vote for the senator who best represents his section. To help the reporters, you may supply them with questions like these:

> Senators, is it true that the first tariffs were for revenue purposes only?
> Why did Alexander Hamilton, our first Secretary of Treasury, recommend tariffs on manufactured goods?
> Do you think the Tariff of 1816 was justified?
> Senators, do you think that tariffs tend to separate this nation?
> Senator Clay, will you please explain how the American system would work?
> Senator Clay, do you think that tariffs favor one class over another?
> Senator Webster, don't you feel that, since the West is in a depression, the rest of the nation should help out?
> Senator Calhoun, what has been the position of the South, in the past, on tariff issues?
> Senator Calhoun, do you feel that Clay's American system will weaken your position on states' rights?

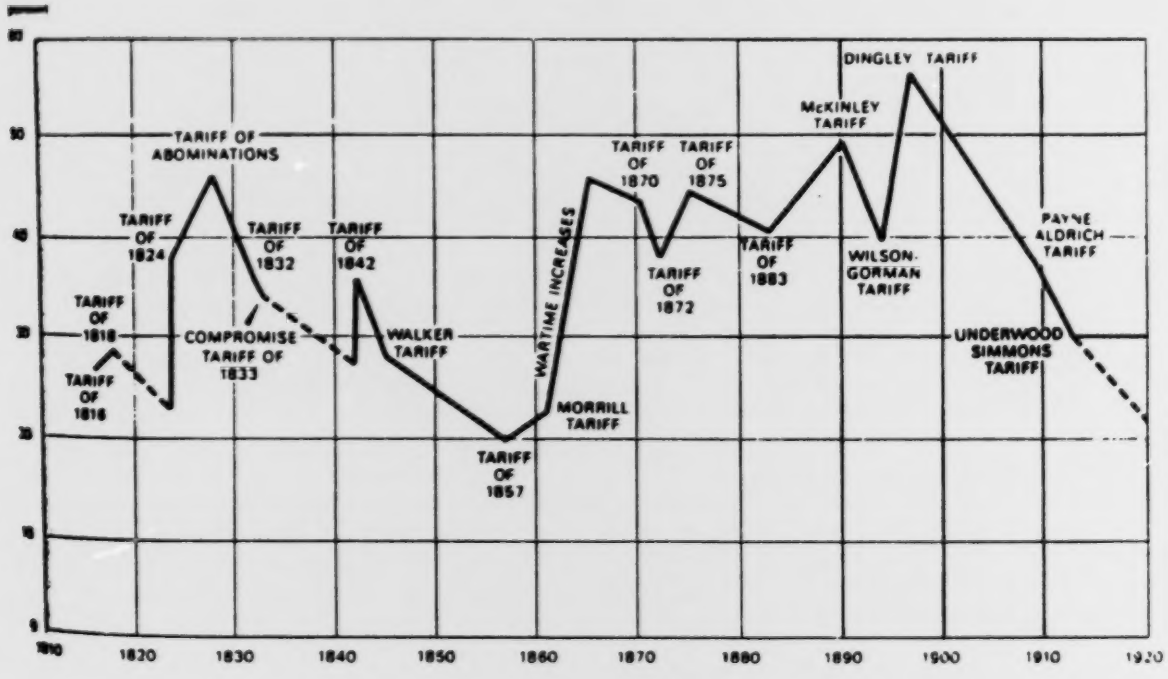
THE TARIFF ISSUE OF 1824

Activity 3 – Analyzing a Chart on United States Tariff Rates

Below is a graph dealing with United States tariff rates from the beginning of the 19th century until the end of World War I. Protectionists–those favoring higher rates on imported goods–have claimed that it is necessary to protect our industries against foreign goods. Free traders claim that placing tariffs on imported goods is bad for the economy.

After studying the graph below, please answer the following questions:

1. Explain what is meant by tariff rates?
2. Why do you feel that the rates are changed so often?
3. The United States has witnessed a number of panics and recessions, most notably the Panic of 1837, Panic of 1857, Depression of 1894, Panic of 1893 and the Panic of 1907. Can you draw any correlations between tariffs and panics and depressions?
4. When did tariffs reach their high and their low points during this time?
5. According to the chart, whose views were more prevalent, Webster's or Clay's?
6. Which sections of the nation, before the Civil War, would have favored a tariff and which would have opposed it?
7. What is meant by the tariff of abomination?



LAND AND FREEDOM

8. PANIC OF 1837

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Recessions, such as the Panic of 1837, result from varied causes.

Sub-theme: An important cause of this panic was speculation in land.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- Specie Circular
- land speculation
- inflation
- recession and panics
- money supply

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare opposing points of view on land speculation
- analyze a chart dealing with price rises and money in circulation
- research a specific business crisis in our history
-

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison Wesley, ch. 7
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 40
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 10
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 9
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 10
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 8

Because today's world demands a better grasp of economics for all, these lessons are published in the public interest by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, in cooperation with the Henry George School.

Henry George was an economist and philosopher whose land reform ideas have been adopted in many parts of Australia and New Zealand, as well as in Pennsylvania's major cities, including Pittsburgh. Land is a gift of nature, according to George, needed by all and to be shared by all, not by just a few.

The foundation, a non-profit publisher, was incorporated in 1925 to help abolish poverty by keeping George's books in print and by disseminating his ideas. Books, pamphlets, and films by other authors are also published. In addition, the foundation helps finance the American Journal of Economics and Sociology and supports university and other group programs.

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PANIC OF 1837

Recessions, like wars, have been an integral part of United States history. Shortly after our War of Independence, the nation witnessed the first in a series of depressions—dislocations that have caused this country undue economic havoc. Following the panic of 1785, another slump ensued and then another, but neither of these compared in intensity with the Panic of 1837.

Immediate causes are more easily ascertained than are fundamental causes. In the case of this panic, the underlying causes were varied: incurrence of large debts by states due to overexpansion of canals and construction of railroads; an unfavorable balance of trade as imports exceeded exports, resulting in a loss of specie; and crop failures in 1835 and 1837. None of these compare, however, with the impact of land speculation preceding the panic. It was a period of speculative mania.

State and wildcat banks grew topsy turvy during the 1830's, due partly to the demise of the Bank of the United States. Funds were more easily available as investors borrowed money at a torrid pace. Not only the small western farmer, but merchants, manufacturers and traders also borrowed heavily. The business community, rather than pay off debts and refinance new ventures, anticipated greater returns if they invested in speculative enterprises. Leading the list of speculative ventures were investments in readily available cheap land.

Land offices throughout the country reported record sales as speculators invested for quick returns. Between 1834 and 1836, sales totaled 37 million acres. In fact, sales in 1836 were ten times greater than in 1830. "Land office business" was the order of the day. In an effort to curb this speculative fever, President Jackson issued the Specie Circular. This order mandated all land offices to accept only gold and silver, rather than "rag" money, in payment for public lands. Since state banks did not have adequate specie backing, land sales dropped. Numerous speculators defaulted in their payments, as little gold and silver was available.

Although the federal government tried to halt speculation, especially in large tracts of land, it was unsuccessful and the mania spread. Speculators, armed with ample cash, knowledge of the best lands available assessed by their shrewd agents. and a slew of unethical and illegal methods, gained the upper hand in their quest for land.

Public land, although the most important facet of speculation, was by no means the only kind of land sold. Urban real estate was also caught up in this mania as values increased. A Hartford speculator relates making 75% annually on an investment of $1,000 in Michigan, where the boom was in high gear. Not only the mid-west witnessed wild speculation. Valuation of real property increased in New York over 50% in five years. And even Maine timber lands tripled in price in just a few years.

When Andrew Jackson left the Presidency, he bequeathed to his successor, Martin Van Buren, an economy that had been dangerously. damaged as a result of the battle between "Old Hickory" and Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank of the United States. The wounds of battle severely damaged the nation's economy.

PANIC OF 1837

Activity 1 – Webster vs. George: Contrasting Views

Land speculation, considered to be a major cause of the Panic of 1837, was defended by Daniel Webster, senator from Massachusetts:

> The government land, therefore, at the present prices, and at the present moment, is the cheapest safe object of investment. The sagacity of capital has found this out, and it grasps the opportunity. Purchase, it is true, has gone ahead of emigration; but emigration follows it, in near pursuit, and spreads its thousands and its tens of thousands close on the heels of the surveyor and the land hunter. . .Nor are we to overlook, in this survey of the causes of the increase in the sales of public lands, the effects, almost magically, of the great and beneficent agent of prosperity. wealth and power, internal improvement.

Citing land speculation as a major cause of depressions, Henry George, reformer and economist, later criticized this type of venture:

> Given a progressive community, in which population is increasing and one improvement succeeds another, land must constantly increase in value. This steady increase naturally leads to speculation in which future increase is anticipated, and land values are carried beyond the point at which, under the existing conditions of production, their accustomed returns would be left to labor and capital. Production, therefore, begins to stop. Not that there is necessarily, or even probably, an absolute diminution (decrease) in production; but there is what in a progressive community would be equivalent to an absolute diminution of production in a stationary community–a failure of production to increase proportionately, owing to the failure of new increments of labor and capital to find employment at the accustomed rates.

Now that you have read these divergent views, please answer the following questions:

1. How valid is the argument presented by Webster?
2. How valid is the argument presented by George?
3. What does Webster recognize as the reasons for an increase in land sales?
4. What does Webster mean by the "sagacity of capital"?
5. Why, according to George, does land speculation lead to a halt in production?
6. Assuming that land speculation is a cause of depressions, how can it be prevented?
7. Are periods of boom and bust inevitable in our type of economy?

PANIC OF 1837

Activity 2 – Analyzing a Chart: Money Supply and Price Levels, 1832-1836

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Index of Prices		Specie		Total Money Supply	
Year	Base (1834-1842 = 100)	Year-to-year % change	Millions of dollars	Year-to-year % change	Millions of dollars	Year-to-year % change
1832	91	–	31	–	150	–
1833	95	4	41	32	168	12
1834	90	5	51	24	172	2
1835	108	20	65 (?)	27	246	43
1836	122	13	73	12	276	12

Place the above chart on the board; explaining each column, as:

(1) year containing the data
(2) index of changes in the price level, from one year to the next
(3) percentage of change from one year to the next
(4) value of silver and gold in circulation
(5) percentage of change in specie from one year to the next
(6) total of money in circulation, including gold, silver and paper currency
(7) percentage of change in money supply from one year to the next

Economists believe that inflation is usually associated with unduly large increases in the money supply. This appeared to be an inflationary period. Have the students examine the chart and then respond to the following:

1. To what degree is there a relationship between prices and money supply?
2. What effect did an increase in specie have upon the money supply?
3. Excluding specie, to what degree was paper money increasing?
4. How did the Specie Circular, administered by Jackson, affect the picture?
5. Although these figures are limited, does the chart give us any clue as to the effect that land speculators had upon the rise in price levels between 1832-1836?

Activity 3: Research Project on Business Cycles

Divide the class into groups, each group responsible for researching one of the economic crises on the chart below. Students then fill in the missing data.

Onset of Crisis	Length of Crisis	Severity of Crisis	Causes	Measures Taken
1781				
1819				
1837				
1857				
1873				
1907				

After this information has been gathered, please request the students to answer the following questions.

1. Are there any causes that appear in more than one crisis? Explain them.
2. Were there any significant events that preceded these business cycles?
3. Were any of these crises caused by governmental action? Explain.
4. Can business cycles be eliminated or are they part of our system?
5. What actions have been taken in the most recent recession?

LAND AND FREEDOM

9. JOHN JACOB ASTOR— AMERICA'S WEALTHIEST MAN

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N. Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Because of unlimited opportunities in the United States, great fortunes have been accumulated.

Sub-theme: Before the Civil War, John Jacob Astor became the wealthiest man in America.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- robber barons
- monopoly
- mortgages
- land value
- urban and rural

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze a newspaper editorial
- research biographical data
- evaluate different criteria for measuring success

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 9
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 59
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 16
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 16
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 27
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 14

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JOHN JACOB ASTOR—AMERICA'S WEALTHIEST MAN

The post-Civil War period witnessed an era in which vast fortunes were made in oil, meat packing and steel. Millions of dollars were accumulated by such industrial giants as Andrew Carnegie, J. Swift Armour and John D. Rockefeller. Whether they were robber barons or lords of creation is a debatable point—but that they had enormous power as a result of their wealth is rarely disputed. However, in the pre-Civil War period, when millionaires were rare in this country, one name stands out. John Jacob Astor had no equal in the ability to amass wealth. How such a boy, with no parental backing, was able to accomplish such a feat, stands out as one of this country's most remarkable economic phenomena.

A vast wilderness with scant governmental supervision, an industrious individual with tremendous drive and a know-how in fur trading all add up to the beginnings of a remarkable career. Using devious and illegal means in his dealings with the Indians, Astor was able to monopolize the fur trade in the western United States during those early days of our nation. And then, utilizing his business acumen to recognize China's potential, he sent them furs, returning with valuable cargoes. By the time he sold the American Fur Company in 1834, he had already accumulated several million dollars. For many, it could well have been the ending of a successful career, but for John Astor, it was only the beginning.

Stage two revolved mainly around New York City and the venture was real estate. Towards the close of his life, Astor commented, "Could I begin life again, knowing what I now know and had money to invest, I would buy every foot of land on the island of Manhattan."

Although he regretted not having the foresight to buy land when he was young, Astor spent the later part of his life marching towards that objective of owning Manhattan. He was no different, however, from others during that period who made vast fortunes in real estate. Peter Goelet, the Rhinelanders, and the Lorillards were among those who made fortunes in land.

Recognizing the coming trend in this country to be a shift from rural areas to urban America, Astor realized that, with an increase in population, accompanied by homes, stores, factories and city services, New York City real estate represented a gold mine. His motto—"Buy and hold. Let others improve."—reaped him untold millions of dollars as he hungrily bought up hundreds of lots for as little as two or three hundred dollars. His methods were ruthless and at times illegal, but during that period of Tammany politics, these practices were not uncommon.

Taking advantage of the Panic of 1837, he bought countless mortgages from small landowners who were in dire need of cash and could not make their payments. Once he obtained land he rarely sold it. Instead he leased it at five per cent for a period of 21 years. As values increased during that period, his portfolio increased significantly. But for those slightly behind in their payments to him there was financial ruin, as Astor then took control of all the property. Through manipulations with city authorities, Astor built up even greater and more profitable land holdings.

Buying waterfront property—and there was plenty on Manhattan Island—along with water grants provided Astor with valuable rights. Obtaining these lands and water grants through his political connections, he was able to get the city to fill in much of these areas with an assortment of land fill, thus extending and increasing his land value. With an ever increasing population and business community, his fortunes rose, so that by the middle of the 19th century, he was the wealthiest man in America, worth 20 million dollars. He was the example for the advice of Will Rogers, a century later:

"Buy land. They ain't making any more of the stuff."

JOHN JACOB ASTOR–AMERICA'S WEALTHIEST MAN

Activity 1 – Analyzing A Newspaper Editorial

When John Jacob Astor died in 1848, his estate was estimated at 20 million dollars, the largest sum ever left by any American up until that period. An editorial appeared in the New York Herald following his death:

> We give in our columns an authentic copy of one of the greatest curiosities of the age–the will of John Jacob Astor, disposing of property amounting to about twenty million dollars, among his various descendants of the first, second, third and fourth degrees. . .If we had been an associate of John Jacob Astor. . .the first idea that we should have put into his head would have been that one-half of his immense property–ten million at least–belonged to the people of the city of New York. During the last fifty years of the life of John Jacob Astor, his property has been augmented and increased in the value by the aggregate intelligence, industry, enterprise and commerce of New York, fully to the amount of one-half its value. The farms and lots of ground which he bought forty, twenty and ten and five years ago, have all increased in value entirely by the industry of the citizens of New York. Of course, it is plain as that two and two make four, that the half of his immense estate, in its actual value, has accrued to him by the industry of the community.

After having read the above editorial, please answer the following questions:

1. In your own words, what is the central idea of this excerpt?

2. At the time of Astor's death, a family of four could comfortably live on $750 per year. Therefore, in today's dollars, what was the value of his estate?

3. What reasons does the author give for stating that a good part of Astor's estate does not rightfully belong to him?

4. Is Astor not entitled to all of the money since he had the foresight in knowing where to invest? Explain.

5. Give examples of the different steps that New York City probably took to increase the value of Astor's land holdings.

6. Why do newspapers have editorial pages?

Activity 2 – Research Project on "Captains of Industry"

Several decades after the death of John Jacob Astor, the United States entered a period of rapid industrialization, creating not only giant corporations but also extremely wealthy individuals. For each of the captains of industry listed below, assign a student to prepare an oral report of three or four minutes, answering the following questions:

How he attained his fortune
His accomplishments in the field
Benefits society gained from his enterprise
Ill effects towards society because of his ventures
Your explanation for his outstanding success

Captains of Industry:

Cornelius Vanderbilt
Jay Cooke
Andrew Carnegie
J. Pierpont Morgan
James Hill
John D. Rockefeller
Marshall Field
Peter Goelet
Jay Gould
Collis Huntington
Edward Harriman

Activity 3 – Evaluating Different Criteria for Measuring Success

Since our early history, success for many has been the accumulation of wealth. That appears to be the case with many of those business leaders we read about in our history books. However, that is but one measurement. Below are excerpts dealing with success:

Henry David Thoreau:

> There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the great part of his life getting a living. . . It is not enough to tell me that you worked hard to get your gold. So does the Devil work hard . . . I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.

Benjamin Franklin:

> God helps them that help themselves.
> The sleepy fox catches no poultry.
> Early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.
> Never leave that till to-morrow which you can do to-day.

Amelia Earhart:

> Because I want to. . . This isn't a reason to be apologized for. It is the most honest motive of mankind's achievement. . . To want in one's heart to do a thing for its own sake; to enjoy doing it; to concentrate one's energies upon it—that is not only the surest guarantee of its success, it is also being true to one's self.

After reading the above quotations, please answer the following questions:

1. What is the major ingredient for success for each of the above three?
2. What are some other views of success not mentioned?
3. Which comes closest to your idea of success? Explain why.

LAND AND FREEDOM

10. THE ANTIRENT RIOTS IN NEW YORK STATE

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N. Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: In rural America, during our early history, farmers owned their own land.

Sub-theme: In eastern New York State, between 1839 and 1845, many tenants rioted because of feudal conditions.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- feudalism
- lease
- patroon
- land speculation
- rent

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze a primary source
- understand the process in making decisions
- research and plan a vacation in New York State

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 7
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 34
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 1
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 4
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 2

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THE ANTIRENT RIOTS IN NEW YORK STATE

For city and suburban dwellers, whose land is measured in fractions of acres, it is difficult to imagine that, in rural areas, farms are partitioned into hundreds of acres. During the medieval period, manors in western Europe could run into the thousands of acres. It was such a system that was transplanted into New York State when the Dutch settled in the early 1600's. Remnants of feudalism seeped into our early history as patroons—lords of the manors—were given huge estates, if certain conditions were met. And so it was with the most important of the patroonships that developed in New York, the Rensselaerwyck manor, consisting of 450,000 acres.

Land history in New York State differed in pattern from most other sections of the colonies because of the Dutch influence. As the patroonship system evolved over the decades, parts of the manor were sold to small farmers. These manors, along with millions of acres confiscated by New York after the American Revolution, were sold to speculators.

A system of leasing which had existed since the middle of the 17th century allowed a freeholder to buy land from the lord of the manor with little or no down payment. For several years, no rent was expected, but after that period the leaseholder was expected to pay the lord, as rent, part of his produce. In addition, certain feudal customs prevailed, such as working for the owner, clearing his acreage and even needing the owner's permission to entertain guests. Upon the sale of such land, the lord received a percentage—usually 25 or 30 per cent—of the proceeds.

Conditions were difficult for many farmers who, particularly on the Rensselaer manor, fell into debt. After the death of Stephen Van Rensselaer in 1839, a significant change occurred. The sons, unlike their benevolent and charitable father, demanded of the freeholders all back rent and other obligations previously not adhered to. When attempts were made to collect the back rents, riots began.

Armed conflicts raged throughout Albany County, spreading to the Mohawk and Delaware valleys. Farmers ignored writs of ejection issued as a result of their refusal to pay the rent. Local authorities attempted to enforce the writs but were resisted and harassed by farmers, sometimes disguised as Indians. Governor Seward, although sympathetic to the farmers' plight, was compelled to back up the law enforcement agencies. In Delaware County conditions reached the stage of anarchy, requiring the governor to declare a state of insurrection.

Physical force was not the only form of resistance that occurred. Associations and societies were formed by the tenant farmers, as conventions were held in Berne, New York, the unofficial capital of the antirent movement. As the protest gained momentum, it attracted national land reformers whose philosophy extended beyond local problems. Dealing with these problems in more universal terms, they espoused the concept that all have a right to the earth and all land monopoly should be abolished.

As the battlefield shifted from the back hills of central New York State to the courts and legislative bodies, the antirent agitation influenced both major political parties in calling for a state constitutional convention in 1846. Wearied by years of bickering, the convention acted to correct some of the abuses. Feudal tenures and the 12-year limit on leases, along with the quarter sales percentage payments upon sale of property, were abolished. Many farmers were not satisfied with these reforms, because they applied to only the future and not the past. Limited as the laws were in reforming New York's land system, they nevertheless helped to dramatize domination by the aristocratic clique and brought into the open the iniquitous land monopoly in the Empire State.

THE ANTIRENT RIOTS IN NEW YORK STATE

Activity 1 – Analyzing A Primary Source

Vestiges of European feudalism still existed in parts of New York State as late as the 1830's. Thousands of tenants worked and paid the owners rents and services. From 1839 until 1846, New York was the scene of antirent rioting. Meeting in Berne, New York, in 1845, the antirenters held a convention and adopted resolutions expressing their concern. Below are excerpts:

> Resolved that. . . the late and lamentable scenes in the country of Rensselaer. . . call loudly for the censure of a civilized and enlightened community against all and every act infringing in the least upon law and order, and that we entirely disavow all and any connection with lawless and reckless desperadoes. . .
>
> Resolved that we cannot conceive of any sufficient cause for the continuance of "contracts" which are acknowledged to be "onerous in their exactions, and tenuous in their nature and character are uncongenial with the habits and opinions of a free people" and the principles of a free government. . .
>
> The following. . . was unanimously adopted:
>
> > To the Hon. the Legislature of the State of New York. . .
> > conceiving the existing laws of this state relating to landlord and tenant to be unjust, oppressive, and diametrically opposed to the spirit of free and republican institutions [we] petition. . . for the repeal of all laws granting special privileges to landlords in the collection of their rents. . .
> > . . . petition your honorable body for the passage of an act authorizing tenants, when prosecuted for rents, to set up a defense against such prosecution the want of a good and sufficient title to the premises in the landlord. . .

After reading that resolution, please answer the following questions:

1. How does a primary document differ from a secondary document? Give examples.
2. Why is the first paragraph of the document included? What would the document's tone be if this had been omitted?
3. The document mentions "contract." To what does it refer?
4. What did the tenants consider to be unjust and oppressive?
5. What is meant by title to property, particularly to land?
6. What functions do conventions serve in general?
7. To what degree were the protesters' demands reasonable or unreasonable?

THE ANTIRENT RIOTS IN NEW YORK STATE

Activity 2 – Understanding the Process in Making Decisions

PETER'S DILEMMA

All of us, at one time or another, are faced with making decisions. It is not always a case of choosing between right and wrong, but rather, sometime, between two choices, both of which are morally right. Below is a dilemma for you to read:

The year is 1839 and Peter lives with his family in New York State on a very large estate. Having inherited this estate, which dates back to the 1600's, the family lives well. However, it owns many thousands of acres which it leases to tenants.

Peter's father, in his late 60's, is dying of an incurable disease and Peter will probably inherit the estate and all the other land which is leased.

Peter has been informed that a group of the tenants leasing land from his father are planning armed resistance, for they refuse to pay their rent. This resistance may well result in violence. To avoid being caught, they plan to dress like Indians. Peter knows the identity of the ringleader.

Having grown up with the tenants, Peter empathizes with their situation, recognizing that only by some type of action can their situation be brought to light. Many of the tenants feel, as does Peter, that the whole system of land ownership is unfair and contrary to many of the basic principles of democracy.

What is Peter to do? Inform his father, who will probably inform the authorities and thwart Peter's principles? Should he remain silent and secretly loyal to a cause that could bring trial and destitution to his dying father? Should he inform the local officials? Why or why not?

Please answer the following questions:

1. What obligations does anyone have to his family? Is it ever right to disregard a family member for the sake of another? Why or why not?
2. If Peter's father were younger and healthier, would that change your answer? Why or why not?
3. Is violence ever justified in pursuit of social justice? Why or why not?
4. Peter has his whole life ahead of him. Does he have to throw away a good life for himself, his parents and eventually his own wife and children for abstract principles? Why or why not?

Activity 3 – Planning a Vacation in Eastern New York State

The antirent movement took place on land where the landed aristrocracy held extensive tracts in 1840. This included counties such as Columbia, Rensselaer, Albany, Delaware, Schoharie, Greene, Montgomery, Schenectady, Oneida, Sullivan, Ulster and Dutchess.

To help your students learn more about this area, have them plan a vacation in one of these regions. This means getting acquainted with a number of books and vacation booklets dealing with New York State.

Have the students follow this procedure:

1. Write the Chamber of Commerce of the county chosen.
2. Research books from the library.
3. Map the route on a road map.
4. Prepare a day-by-day itinerary and time schedule for the vacation. This is the heart of the project. Include a brief description of the scenic wonders, historic sites, museums, cultural facilities and recreation area.
5. Since many colleges are located in this area, obtain their names and locations and perhaps write for their brochures.
6. If the student has visited the region, include any personal experience.

When completed, have the students present the materials to the class, using various methods, such as opaque projector, bulletin board display, booklet, and so on. A class booklet of several of the regions reported on could be published.

LAND AND FREEDOM

11. IRISH IMMIGRATION

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Immigration, especially from Europe, has been an integral part of our history, and the reasons why people come to the United States are varied.

Sub-theme: As a result of the Great Famine, the Irish emigrated to the United States in huge numbers during the 1840's.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- "Great Famine"
- second-class citizens
- one-crop economy
- welfare
- Malthusian doctrine

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze an interpretation dealing with a universal cause of poverty
- interpret a bar graph concerning immigration to the United States during the 19th century
- report orally on an interview with a descendant of an Irish immigrant

Related Texts:
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 14
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 10
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 12
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 12
- Rise of the American Nation, Harcourt Brace, ch. 13
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 9

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Henry George was an economist and philosopher whose land reform ideas have been adopted in many parts of Australia and New Zealand, as well as in Pennsylvania's major cities, including Pittsburgh. Land is a gift of nature, according to George, needed by all and to be shared by all, not by just a few.

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IRISH IMMIGRATION

American cities and towns are filled with the grandchildren of immigrants who flocked to our shores from around the world. It was during the 1840's, however, that millions of immigrants set forth across the Atlantic, seeking a better life. From England, Germany and Ireland they came, making that arduous journey for religious or political freedom, or for economic opportunity. For some, however, all conditions at home were unbearable, and in one country, Ireland, about 15% of the population emigrated.

Long before the great famine devastated Ireland during the 1840's, the Irish had been under the domination of the British. During earlier periods of subjection, English rulers—Henry II, Elizabeth, and Cromwell—confiscated provinces in Ireland to reward their followers and pay off debts. This situation caused many Irish to become landless. With the passage of the Penal Laws in 1695, Irish were not only reduced to second-class citizenship, but were forbidden to purchase any land. Large Catholic estates were broken up, reducing acreage per family to smaller and smaller lots. Deprived of their land, forced to live from hand to mouth in mud huts on small, often barren, lots, the Irish became dependent upon a crop which required little acreage and a minimum of good soil—the potato. Thus the stage was set for the famine which began in 1845.

Absentee land ownership was very common. Approximately 1200 non-Irish, mostly living in England, owned most of the land. Farms were usually leased from these owners, but, unlike today's leases, they could be revoked at the whim of the landlord. While farms were allowed to remain in the family—passed down from one generation to another—this was at the option of the landlord. With no sense of ownership or pride in the land, little care was paid to conservation, and land was often overfarmed. In addition, all improvements, such as buildings, reverted to the landlord when the lease ended, thus discouraging any attempts to better the property.

John Stuart Mill commented on this, "In Ireland, the whole agricultural population can be evicted by the mere will of the landlord, whether at the expiration of the lease, or, in the far more common case, of their having no lease."

Several years before the famine, the Devon Commission, set up by the British Parliament, concluded that the underlying problem in Ireland was the antagonism between tenant and landlord. As population increased, placing a greater demand on the land, landlords raised rents, which were already double that of comparable land in England. In order to pay the rent, the tenant had to subdivide the property, a system known as conacre.

The famine lasted several years. One and a half million peasants died and another million emigrated to the United States and England. Attempts to aid, such as those by the United States, were of little avail. At the height of the catastrophe, the British withdrew all benefits to anyone who owned over one quarter of an acre—which included most Irish. The exodus was on.

An expanding population confirmed to some the validity of the Malthusian doctrine—that people will increase at a faster pace than the food supply. Had the population been smaller, so it is claimed, the famine would have been less severe. However, even when the famine was at its worst, food was being shipped out of Ireland to England. There was no shortage of food. But the Irish had no buying power. As landlords had called the tune before, so did they during the famine. Rents leaving the country represented a substantial portion of a tenant's savings or crop. Past accumulations could have enabled the peasant to purchase food that was being exported, but the system of land ownership prevented this. The simple facts were that most of the Irish had no money to pay for food.

These rents had to be paid whether crops were good or not. Since potato crops had failed, Irish farmers had neither their own potatoes to eat nor money from potato sales with which to buy bread or other food.

Land had become an obsession for the Irish peasant. Without it, starvation was his future. Citing the earth's importance—and overriding all other considerations—the Devon Commission stated "the one absorbing feeling is that the possession of land stifles all others and extinguishes the plainest principles of humanity." And so the Irish sailed away from thier birthplace.

IRISH IMMIGRATION

Activity 1 – Analyzing An Interpretation

Henry George, social critic of the late 19th century, wrote in his book, *The Irish Land Question:*

. . . it is a mistake to consider the Irish Land Question as a mere local question, arising out of conditions peculiar to Ireland, and which can be settled by remedies that can have but local application. On the contrary, I contend that what has been brought into prominence by Irish distress, and forced into discussion by Irish agitation, is something infinitely more important than any mere local question could be . . . What is involved in this Irish Land Question is not a mere local matter between Irish landlords and Irish tenants, but the great social problem of modern civilization. What is arraigned in the arraignment of the claims of Irish landlords is nothing less than the widespread institution of private property in land. In the assertion of the natural rights of the Irish people is the assertion of the natural rights that, by virtue of his existence, pertain everywhere to man.

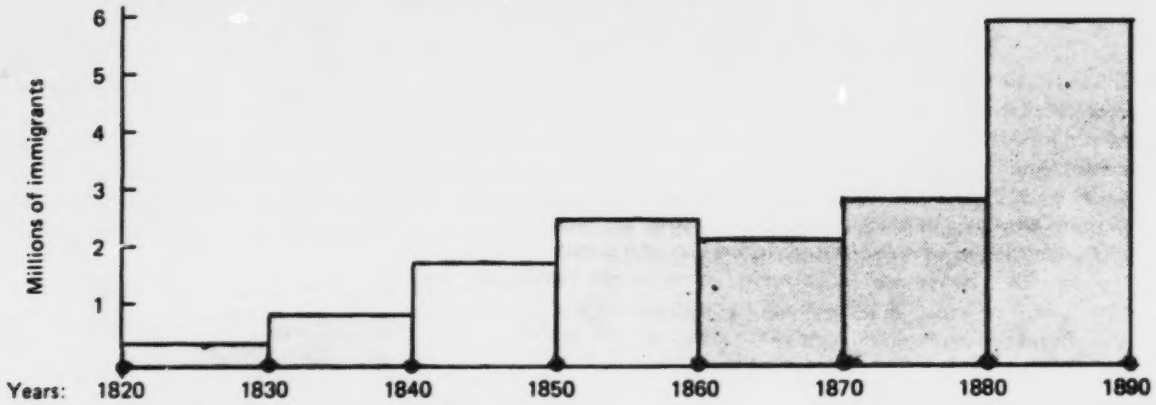
Based on this interpretation of a major problem that confronted the Irish during the famine, please answer the following questions.

1. What does George consider to be the Irish Land Question?
2. To what degree is this local or international in nature?
3. What seems to be implied in this reading as to his solution?
4. What clues, if any, does he give to accomplish this solution?
5. What examples can you give today that this question is a universal one?
6. What evidence can you give that this question is not a universal problem?
7. Are there, in the world today, certain causes which are universal? Explain.

IRISH IMMIGRATION

Activity 2 – Reading A Bar Graph

Immigration into the United States



After reading the bar graph, please answer the following questions:

1. Approximately how many immigrants entered the United States during the total period shown?
2. Based upon your knowledge of history, what may have caused some of the increases in the latter decades?
3. What are some conclusions we can draw from the graph?
4. What other information could have been included in the graph?
5. Discuss some advantages in using such a graph.
6. Discuss some disadvantages in using a graph.
7. Obtain figures for 20th century immigration and plot a bar graph.

Activity 3 – Interviewing A Person Of Irish Heritage

In order to find out about why the Irish emigrated to the United States and what has happened to their descendants, students might visit someone of Irish descent. If this isn't easy to arrange, the telephone yellow pages might list Irish organizations which could provide sources. People over 50 are more likely to have the best information on the topics below. If an interview is not possible, students might find data in books about Irish people in America. Before the interview, students should compile questions, samples of which appear below:

Personal:
- When and where were you born?
- When and where were your parents born?
- When and where were your grandparents born? (if possible, go back further.)
- What stories have been handed down in your family?

Education:
- Where did you go to school?
- How important was education in your family?
- What do you know about schooling for your parents, grandparents, etc?

Family members.
- What do you know about the reasons for your family coming to this country?
- To what degree has this information been passed on to your children?
- Is there an increase or decrease with your children concerning the importance of their heritage? Explain.

After students complete their interviews, each discusses responses with the class, thus helping the group formulate the varied reasons for Irish immigration.

LAND AND FREEDOM

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Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School.
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: The Mexican War in 1846 was a continuation of our policy of Manifest Destiny.

Sub-theme: Following the Mexican War, Mexican land grants resulted in considerable confusion.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- land grants
- land monopolization
- squatters' rights
- Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
- ranchos

Performance objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze a historical interpretation
- debate the opposing points of view on the morality of the Mexican War
- read a map dealing with our westward movement

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 7
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 47
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 11
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 11
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 14
- Rise of the American Nation, Harcourt Brace
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 14

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THE MEXICAN CESSIONS

Prompted by land-hungry Americans, the prospects of obtaining trading ports on the Pacific coast and a desire to spread the wings of the eagle, the war between Mexico and the United States erupted. Lasting only two years, this conflict resulted in the extension of the United States to the west coast. With the signing of the treaty ending the war—the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—in 1848, the United States not only had increased its territory but also had the difficult problem of dealing with an important provision of the agreement—the many land titles granted by the Mexicans.

Before Mexico became independent from Spain in 1821, the vast domain in the southwestern section of the United States had been part of the Spanish Empire. Having established settlements along the west coast called missions, as a base to convert the Indians, and several pueblos, which were large towns, Spain made large land grants to selected individuals to raise cattle. These ranchos were encouraged by their government, as California was well suited for this type of an economy. Ranchos, as they were called, were usually not well defined, many of them lacking clear title. This system, carried on by the Mexican government, resulted in a haphazard pattern of land ownership. It worked because there was no pressure from an expanding population.

As conditions worsened between Mexico and the United States, the last two Mexican governors of the southwest territory—Pico and Micheltorena—hastily made grants to many Mexicans, hoping the grants would be honored after the war. Over 800 grants were made, ceding over eight million acres. Fifty percent of these grants were made within nine years of the start of the war, indicating the intent of the governors. These ranchos varied in size from 20,000 acres to over one million acres. And, according to the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, all these grants by the Mexican government were to be honored by the victorious United States. Thus began the trouble.

With the discovery of gold, the race was on, as untold thousands travelled across the continent, seeking their fortunes. Imbued with a spirit of adventure, settlers searched for gold wherever it was located, even on these Mexican land grants. These squatters maintained that they had a right to the soil, but our government had agreed to respect Mexican ownership. Then the dam burst, as questions about title were asked.

Were many of these claims valid? Although the Mexican government had rules on mapping, applications and surveying procedures, they had not been enforced, causing many grants to be questioned. To review this chaotic situation, a land commission was initiated to investigate validity. Each claimant had to prove the validity of his title, a costly and difficult task. Because of the expense of litigation, many grants were forfeited. And the land, instead of being occupied by settlers, fell into the hands of speculators.

It took decades to properly determine legal ownership. Many instances of fraud were uncovered. Six hundred thousand acres in the vicinity of present-day San Francisco were claimed by Jose Limantour, who persuaded the United States government that he owned the area. His title was discovered to be fraudulent. Not only were Mexican land grants obtained illegally; ample evidence reveals stupendous land frauds in all the western and Pacific states, enabling speculators to obtain valuable mineral and timber lands. Collusion between speculator and United States government offficials resulted in vast areas obtained by perjury, fraudulent surveys and false entries.

Because of this dilemma as to the title of various lands in the Mexican Cession, hundred of thousands of people delayed migration to the west. Many of these vast estates became concentrated in a few hands and led to the development of corporate farming in the 20th century. Because of this, vast blocks of land in California are owned today by individuals or corporations.

THE MEXICAN CESSIONS

Activity 1 – A Historical Interpretation

Henry George, an economist and social reformer, wrote much about the role that land plays in our economy, stressing that its method of distribution affects greatly the way men live. In 1871, in one of his books on this subject, he has comments concerning California and the Mexican grants:

> In all the new States of the Union land monopolization has gone on at an alarming rate, but in none of them so fast as in California, and in none of them, perhaps, are its evil effects so manifest. . .
>
> California has had one curse which the other States have not had—the Mexican grants. The Mexican land policy was a good one for a sparsely settled pastoral Country, such as California before the American occupation. To every citizen who wanted it, a cattle range was granted. By the terms of the cession it was provided that these rights should be recognized.
>
> It would have been better, far better, if the American Government had agreed to permit these grant-holders to retain a certain amount of land around their improvements, and. . . for the rest of the grants. . . payment of a certain sum per acre, turning it into the public domain. . .
>
> The Mexican grants were vague, running merely for so many leagues within certain natural boundaries. It is this indefiniteness which has given such an opportunity for rascality, and has made such a curse in California. . . has prevented. . . their original owners from reaping from them any commensurate benefit . . . the native grant holders were completely at the mercy of shrewd lawyers and sharp speculators, and . . . nearly all the grants passed into other hands.

Having read this interpretation of the Mexican grants, please answer the following questions:

1. What mistake, according to George, did this government make concerning its land policy?
2. How would George have corrected this mistake? Explain what you think he means.
3. How did the terms of our agreement with Mexico after the war affect our land difficulties?
4. "He was not much of a lawyer in those days who had not a Mexican Grant in his pocket, the title to which his client paid for." Explain the meaning of this quotation.
5. Evaluate the interpretation by Henry George.
6. United States land policy is still an important factor in the nation's economy. Explain recent actions which verify that statement.
7. Explain what other events you have studied to date that related to our land policies.

THE MEXICAN CESSION

Activity 2 – Debating the Morality of the Mexican War

Congress, in 1846, declared war on Mexico. As a result of that war, the United States increased its territory significantly, adding California, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Nevada, thereby changing history and almost culminating our westward advance.

The Mexican War was one many Americans considered unnecessary and unjust, while others felt it was our destiny to occupy all land from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In order to bring out the contrasting points of view, hold two debates on the morality of the Mexican War, one to have taken place just before the declaration of war and the other in the present. So that there is some uniformity, have two students take the pro position and two students take the con position:

Resolved: That the United States was justified in going to war with Mexico.

It is suggested that the two students opposing the war research the positions of Abraham Lincoln, who stated it was "unnecessary and unconstitutionally begun by the president," and of Henry David Thoreau, who went to jail rather than pay a tax to support the war. (His essay, Civil Disobedience, is recommended for all students.) Students advocating the pro side can research the positions of President James Polk, including his war message, and the views of such expansionists as John L. Sullivan, who coined the expression "Manifest Destiny." After both debates have been presented–the first dealing with views before the declaration of war and the second reflecting present opinions–have the entire class analyze the debates.

Activity 3 – Map Reading

The United States in 1850

This map illustrates the extent of United States expansion from the end of the war of independence with Great Britain until 1850. Using your textbook in conjunction with the map, fill in the following information on the chart:

Territories	Date Acquired	How Acquired	Current States in Territory
Original 13 states			
Louisiana			
Florida			
Texas			
Oregon			
Gadsden Purchase			
Mexican Cession			

LAND AND FREEDOM

12. RAILROAD LAND GRANTS

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: There were major, though costly, transportation improvements in the United States during the 19th century.

Sub-Themes:
- railroad expansion
- land grants

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- land speculation
- land grants
- subsidies
- corporations
- internal improvements

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare opposing views on the issue of land grants
- analyze an advertisement ecnouraging settlement in the West
- summarize opinions about railroad land promotion in a short essay

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 7
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 49 and 58
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 10 and 16
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 11 and 19
- Rise of the American Nation, (volume 1), Harcourt Brace, ch. 14
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 15

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RAILROAD LAND GRANTS

With the end of the War of 1812, the United States turned its attention to problems within the country. One was the role of the federal government in encouraging internal improvements. At first, states supported many ventures, such as building roads and canals. This support was limited, however, to industrial states. Early attempts at interstate road construction failed because Congress refused to act upon any proposals. While many canals were built, they alone could not accomplish the geal of linking East and West.

Increasingly, however, legislators felt the need to bring the vast domains in the West closer to the markets and people in the East. The only means of transportation that could accomplish this was railroads. Since they were privately financed, rail companies seldom began unprofitable projects. But they needed encouragment. Therefore, in the 1830s, railroad companies and others began attempts to convince legislators to support railroad expansion.

Political maneuvering and economic necessity thus combined to help pass the first of several land grant bills. These made government gifts of free land to the railroad companies in exchange for laying track in designated areas. In 1850, for example, the Illinois Central received a land grant of several million acres. Standard procedure was to distribute land by alternate sections along the proposed railroad line, one section going to the company and the next kept by the government. As land values increased, therefore, both the railroads and the government gained. Railroad companies then sold their newly profitable lots and used the proceeds to pay for materials and labor to continue their expansion.

In this way, railroad construction became interwoven with land sales, which provided much of the capital needed to finance future undertakings. Heavy advertising by the railroads in the United States and Western Europe encouraged land sales. Both migration westward and immigration were thus accelerated by railroad development.

With the passage of the Pacific Railway Bill during the Civil War, the Union Pacific Railway Company and Central Pacific were given millions of acres of land to complete a railroad all the way to the Pacific Ocean, with one company starting at the west coast and the other farther east. Both lines met at Promontory Point, Utah, in 1869.

Shortly after this historic event, however, land grants ceased to be public policy, because many people had begun to question giving away so much land to private companies. Between 1850 and 1870, over 129 million acres—seven percent of the continental United States—had been ceded to 80 railroad companies. Most of that land was west of the Mississippi. The value of grants amounted to more than half a billion dollars, a total even greater than it seems today, since the dollar was worth much more then.

And the historical judgment about the short and long term effects of this giveaway? Fortunes were made, many due to land sales alone, while others were created by profits made by railroad companies in their roles as builders. As land became scarcer with population and industrial growth, the railroads controlled miles of valuable real estate, which they could sell when the price was right or hold until the price rose.

On the other hand, West and East were brought together, goods went to market more cheaply, federal shipping costs were cut even more, and jobs were opened up as a result of both railroad construction and the new settlements which had arisen.

RAILROAD LAND GRANTS

Activity 1 – Land Grand Ads: An Analysis

—THE—

Sioux City & Pacific Railroad

BEAUTIFUL ELKHORN VALLEY

- WHICH IS -

The Garden Spot of Nebraska!

CHICAGO, ST. PAUL, MINNEAPOLIS & OMAHA RY.

HOMESTEAD COUNTY

Free Homes for the Million

FORT NIOBRARA ON THE NIOBRARA RIVER,

SHORT LINE TO THE BLACK HILLS.

THE SIOUX CITY & PACIFIC RAILROAD,

"Sioux City Route,"

—OF THE—

KANSAS CITY, OMAHA & ST. PAUL SHORT LINE,

Pullman Palace Sleeping Cars,

BETWEEN

KANSAS CITY and ST. PAUL WITHOUT CHANGE.

Although there was no Madison Avenue during this period, advertising was used to persuade people to act. As you can see from this poster, the intent was to convince settlers and immigrants to move westward. After examining the poster, please answer the following:

1. What expressions in the ad represent the "sell"?
2. "Free Homes for the Millions" was a very popular slogan. Why?
3. What was left out of the ad?
4. Locate on a map the route of the railroad.
5. Bring in a modern ad and list 3 ways in which it differs from the above.

RAILROAD LAND GRANTS

Activity 2 – Webster vs. Greeley : Contrasting Views

Using public land to promote economic development was advocated by many, among them the famous senator from Massachusetts, Daniel Webster, who wrote:

> In most of the new States of the West, the United States are yet proprietors of vast bodies of land. Throughout some of these States, and sometimes through these same public lands, the local authorities have prepared to carry expensive canals, for the general benefit of the country. Some of these undertakings have been attended with great expense, and have subjected the States . . . to large debts and heavy taxation. The lands of the United States, being exempted from all taxation, of course bear no part of this burden. Looking at the United States, therefore, as a great land proprietor, essentially benefitted by these improvements, I have felt no difficulty in voting for the appropriation of parts of these lands, as a reasonable contribution by the United States to these general objects.

Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, took exception, however, to giving land to the railroads, declaring:

> We do not agree with Mr. Webster as to the policy of gigantic land grants for railroads or other purposes. We believe they do essentially interfere with the benign policy of granting lands in limited allotments to actual settlers and improvers, without exacting any price therefrom. . . . Settle the lands compactly, and railroads will be constructed through them rapidly and abundantly. Establish the principle that improved land is a free gift of God, to be dispensed as air and water are, to all who need, and as they need, and ample capital will be released from land speculators to construct any number of railroads.

Now that you've read these divergent views, please answer these questions:

1. How valid is the argument presented by Webster?
2. How valid is that presented by Greeley?
3. Is it necessary to encourage businessmen to invest by giving them government subsidies? Why or why not?
4. At what point should government help industries?
5. Did large land grants to railroads lead to monopolization of huge tracts of land?
6. All the railroads receiving grants eventually failed; is there any message?
7. If the railroads had not received land grants, how might the development of the United States been different?

Activity 3 – Mark Twain's Tunkhannock, Rattlesnake and Youngwomenstown Railroad: Your Views

Here is an excerpt from Mark Twain's The Gilded Age. In this characterization of Mr. Bigler, Twain expresses the idea of railroad promotion. After reading it, please write a short essay, in which one paragraph summarizes what you've already learned about railroad land promotion and the second paragraph contains your views about the idea below.

> Mr. Bigler's plan this time, about which he talked loudly, was the building of the Tunkhannock, Rattlesnake and Youngwomenstown Railroad, which would not only be a great highway to the west, but would open to the market inexhaustible coal-fields, and untold millions of lumber. The plan of operation was very simple.
>
> "We'll buy the lands," explained he, "on long time, backed by the notes of good men; and then mortgage them for money enough to get the road well on. Then get the towns on the line to issue their bonds for stock . . . We can sell the rest of the stock on the prospect of the business of the road . . . and also sell the lands at a big advance, on the strength of the road."

LAND AND FREEDOM

14. HOMESTEAD ACT

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Throughout our history, the sale and leasing of public lands has created dissension among many groups.

Sub-theme: After decades of debate, the passage of the Homestead Act offered opportunities for land for the landless.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- public domain
- westward migration
- homestead movement
- land grants
- land reform

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze a piece of propaganda dealing with free land
- write an editorial on the pros and cons of the Homestead Act
- fill out an application as required under the Homestead Act

Related Texts:
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 57
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 14
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 15
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 18
- Rise of the American Nation, Harcourt Brace, ch. 18
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 16

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HOMESTEAD ACT

While the sale and leasing of federal lands has become a burning issue today, it was even more so in the 19th century. Even though disposal of the public domain has been important since the time of our birth as a nation, it was not until the 1840's that Congress focused its attention on the best means to give away public lands. The lasting effect of huge grants of land to the railroads has long been a subject of debate. Less apparent, though not necessarily less significant, has been the story of government grants to the landless.

Periods of recession—with its unemployment and low wages—cause movements to be born that attempt to alleviate such economic conditions. And so it was following the Panic of 1837. Workingmen and embryonic labor organizations encouraged a westward movement—a migration possible only if sections of the public domain were available. Advocates of land reform urged access to public lands as a means to escape the evils of an industrial society. After all, they pointed out, the United States was blessed with what seemed at that time an unlimited reservoir of natural resources. The slogan, "The right to labor and the right to the soil" became the cry of the jobless and the hopeless back east.

Supported by editor Horace Greeley and politicians Sam Houston, Stephen Douglas and Andrew Jackson, land legislation reached the floors of Congress, but with limited success. When both houses had passed a homestead bill before the Civil War, President Buchanan had vetoed it, reflecting the sentiment of the South and several northeastern states that the homestead movement would destroy land values and stimulate westward migration. Such a population shift, they felt, would upset the labor advantages they enjoyed. It was the Civil War, however, with the secession of southern states, that created a favorable political situation for legislation to give free land to the landless.

Passed in 1862 and 1864, the Homestead Act resulted in a significant shift in population from eastern states to the Missouri region. In order to be eligible for 160 acres of free land, one had to be the head of a family, 21 years of age, a citizen or with the expectation of becoming one, and not having taken arms against the Union. Those serving in the military were allowed to waive some restrictions. Conditions were limited enough to encourage not only migration but also immigration from European countries. What seemed to be a bonanza for the homeless, the jobless and those desiring to break the bonds of eastern heritage was not actually the case. As so often happens, goals are often far removed from reality.

For title to be transferred to the homesteader by the government, it was necessary to start building within a short period of time and to have occupied the lot for at least 5 years. However, with the practice of commutation, a settler could take title after the first year by paying $1.25 an acre. Waiting that short period of time enabled homesteaders to sell their acreage—and so they did—to large landholders and corporations.

What had started out as a legitimate means to provide a livelihood for many settlers ended in the transfer of large parts of the public domain from government control to private corporations holding large tracts of land. Ironically, what had begun in the 1840's as a way to limit land speculation—keeping it out of the hands of those seeking immediate profit—resulted in a windfall for those very groups.

Although the Homestead Act fell short of accomplishing its objectives, it did spur a mass exodus westward, speeding the development of that section of the United States.

HOMESTEAD ACT

Activity 1 – Analyzing a Handbill for Free Land

Several decades before the passage of the Homestead Act, there had been agitation in both political circles and the labor press. Below is a handbill which was widely distributed in 1848:

Are you an American citizen? Then you are a joint owner of the public lands. Why not take enough of your property to provide yourself a home? Why not vote yourself a farm?

Are you a party follower? Then you have long enough employed your vote to benefit scheming office seekers. Use it for once to benefit yourself: Vote yourself a farm.

Are you tired of slavery? Of drudging for others? Of poverty and its attendant miseries? Then vote yourself a farm.

Would you free your country and the sons of toil everywhere from the heartless, irresponsible mastery of the aristocracy of avarice? . . .Then join with your neighbors to form a true American party ... whose chief measures will be first to limit the quantity of land that any one may henceforth monopolize or inherit; and second to make the public lands free to actual settlers only, each having the right to sell his improvements to any man not possessed of other lands.

After reading this handbill, please answer the following questions:

1. What was meant by "Vote yourself a farm."
2. If you were an industrialist, how would you respond to this propaganda?
3. Why would a manufacturer be against such a movement?
4. How effective do you think this type of handbill was?
5. Using an important issue today, write up a similar handbill.

HOMESTEAD ACT

Activity 2 – Writing an Editorial

After reading about the background of the Homestead Act, have students write an editorial either favoring or opposing passage of the act.

To do this, divide the class into several groups. Each group is to jointly compose an editorial from the position of one of the following periodicals:

Southern newspaper (supported by slave owners)
Metropolitan newspaper (supported by businessmen)
Labor magazine (supported by unions)
Farm magazine (supported by farmers)

After each group has written its editorial, one group member reads it aloud to the class. Coming out of this activity should be the reasons why the Homestead Act was supported and also why it was rejected.

Activity 3 – Filling Out an Application

Few formalities were necessary to become an independent landowner under the Homestead Act. Even the application was simple, compared to what is required today. After reading the application below, please do the following:

1. Fill in the information as if you were applying for land under the Homestead Act.
2. Obtain any other type of application—for example, an application for a job or perhaps an application for a college loan. Compare both and discuss why there is such a difference.
3. To what degree does an application like the one pictured lend itself to fraud?

MANNER OF PROCEEDING TO OBTAIN TITLE TO PUBLIC LANDS.

(1.)

HOMESTEAD.

Application No. ——

Land Office at ——, ——, 18

I, —— ——, of ——, do hereby apply to enter, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved May 20, 1862, entitled "An act to secure Homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain," the —— of Section ——, in Township —— of Range ——, containing —— acres

Land Office at ——, ——, 18 .

I —— ——, Register of the Land Office, do hereby certify that the above application is for Surveyed Lands of the class which the applicant is legally entitled to enter under the Homestead act of May 20, 1862, and that there is no prior, valid, adverse right to the same.

——
Register.

——

(2.)

HOMESTEAD.

(*Affidavit.*)

Land Office at ——,

(*Date.*) ——

I, —— —— of ——, having filed my *Application No.* ——, for an entry under the provisions of the act of Congress, approved May 20, 1862, entitled "An act to secure Homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain," do solemnly swear, that [*Here state whether the applicant is the head of a family, or over twenty-one years of age; whether a citizen of the United States, or has filed his declaration of intention of becoming such; or, if under twenty-one years of age, that he has served not less than fourteen days in the army or navy of the United States during actual war; that said Application No.* —— *is made for his or her exclusive benefit; and that said entry is made for the purpose of actual settlement and cultivation, and not, directly or indirectly, for the use or benefit of any other person or persons whomsoever.*]

Sworn to and subscribed, this —— day of ——, before ——, ——,

[*Register or Receiver*] *of the Land Office.*

——

(3.)

MILITARY OR NAVAL HOMESTEAD.

Application No. ——

Land Office at ——, ——, 186

I, —— ——, of ——, being in the —— service of the United States, do hereby apply to enter, under the provisions of the act approved March 21, 1864, amendatory of the Homestead act of May 20, 1862, and for other purposes, a certain tract of land, which —— is hereby authorized to designate, at the foot of this application, as my Homestead, and which I agree to hold as my own selection.

Attest: ——, Commanding officer at ——,

—— ——

Facsimile of a circular of the General Land Office, Sept. 17, 1867

LAND AND FREEDOM

15. FORTY ACRES AND A MULE

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Following the conclusion of the Civil War, the Reconstruction Era attempted to deal with ways to bring the defeated South back into the Union.

Sub-theme: To destroy the society of the South, some radical Republicans suggested that the freed Blacks receive land belonging to the Southerners.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- Reconstruction
- confiscation
- radical Republicans
- land reform
- civil rights amendments

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- compare opposing views on the issue of land distribution
- research, with a dictionary, the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments
- interview a member of Congress, through role playing

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 6
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 53, 54
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch 14
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 17
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 19
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 14

Because today's world demands a better grasp of economics for all, these lessons are published in the public interest by the Henry George School, in cooperation with the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation.

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Henry George School
121 East 30th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016
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FORTY ACRES AND A MULE

Now that the war had ended—a war which pitted North against South—Blacks living in the South envisioned a new era, free from the deprivation of slavery. An assassination, an embittered society, a revengeful Congress and a President with southern sympathies set the stage for a period which is still debated as to its merits. Reconstruction—the era following the Civil War—was an attempt to bring the Confederacy back into the Union by destroying its dependence upon the Blacks. And so a new battle unfolded, about the best means to accomplish this task.

Four million Blacks in the South, although free to go where they wished, now had no land and no shelter. Echoing their feelings, Frederick Douglass said these freedmen "were sent away empty handed, without money, without friends, and without a foot of land to stand upon." Many felt that political freedom, without economic assistance, would simply enable white landholders, with the aid of various local laws, to re-establish bondage.

As debates during Reconstruction centered on what to do about the South, the plight of the Blacks became an integral part of the outcome. Confiscation of southern land became one of the most contested issues. Since the Blacks, as slaves, had tilled the soil for many years, so the argument went, they had every right now to the land. Rebel leaders, who had supported secession, had no right to keep their land, stated members of Congress.

Foremost among Congressional leaders was Thaddeus Stevens, one of the leading radical Republicans. Suggesting that 70,000 rebels owned 394,000,000 acres of land, it seemed only fitting to him that the freedmen be given their own lands. Since this figure represented less than five per cent of white families, the vast majority of southerners would suffer little, but the Blacks would have an opportunity to earn a living, free of the former plantation owners. If the back of the plantation owner was to be broken, then he must be relieved of the source of his power—land—according to this view.

Land that was confiscated had already been given to the newly freed slaves. Meeting with Black leaders, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and General William Tecumseh Sherman had recommended that land be given to the freedmen. In South Carolina and Georgia, 40 acres each were given to more than 40,000 freedmen. In Davis Bend, Mississippi, large tracts of confiscated land were given to 1,800 Blacks, who tilled their soil and made a handsome profit, until President Andrew Johnson rescinded all such orders.

Congress, in its discussions on land reform in the South, did not support any such proposals of specific compensation in land. Some felt that this lack of support for "Forty acres and a mule" spelled defeat for the entire Reconstruction program. Some indicated that political action—the right to vote, civil rights legislation and the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments—would suffice in ameliorating the situation. Others thought that the confiscation of land was a violation of property rights—a right many Congressmen felt was too sacred to tamper with. And there were those who thought that it was good for business not to give Blacks land, so that there would be available a ready supply of labor.

Although the Freedmens Bureau contributed somewhat to better the lot of the Blacks, their economic status remained little changed. Many became sharecroppers. Large and small landowners rented out part of their acreage for a return of 50% of their crop. Already in debt to local merchants, Blacks without the ownership of land were to remain both poverty stricken and also deprived of many of their civil rights.

FORTY ACRES AND A MULE

Activity 1 – Contrasting Views on Land Distribution

Among the many plans offered by the radical Reconstructionists, one dealt with dividing the plantations in the South among the Blacks. Senator Thaddeus Stevens, a strong advocate of this proposal, stated:

> . . . when that wise man, the Emperor of Russia, set free twenty-two million serfs, he compelled their masters to give them homesteads upon the very soil which they had tilled. . . for they have earned this, they have worked upon the land for ages and they are entitled to it . . . The whole fabric of southern society must be changed and never can it be done if this opportunity is lost. How can republican institutions, free schools, free churches, free social intercourse exist in a mingled community of nabobs and serfs? If the South is ever to be made a safe Republic let her lands be cultivated by the toil of the owners, or the free labor of intelligent citizens.

Taking strong exception to the confiscation of land was a leading magazine of that period, the Nation:

> A division of rich men's lands amongst the landless. . . would give a shock to our whole social and political system from which it would hardly recover without the loss of liberty . . . A proposal in which provision is made for the violation of a greater number of the principles of good government and for the opening of a deeper sink of corruption has never been submitted to a legislative body.

Now that you have read these opposing views, please answer these questions:

1. How valid is the argument presented by Stevens?
2. How valid is the argument presented by the Nation?
3. Both arguments agree that this solution would have changed radically southern society. To what degree should this have been a goal during Reconstruction?
4. To what violations of good government is the Nation referring?
5. If Steven's view had prevailed, how do you think southern society would have changed?
6. Why do you think there was little support for the views of Stevens?
7. In what other areas of the world is land reform an issue? Explain.

Activity 2 – Using a Reference Book: The Dictionary

In order to help students better understand the vocabulary below (from Amendments 13, 14 and 15), have them prepare by using a dictionary to:

- divide each work into syllables
- accent the stressed syllable
- respell each word phonetically
- list two meanings of each word
- write a sentence using each word

abridge	jurisdiction	duly
appropriate	apportioned	emancipation
validity	servitude	rebellion
naturalized	involuntary	insurrection
incurred	inhabitant	immunities

Activity 3 – Conducting An Interview

Divide the class into two sections – one favorable to the southern point of view and the other favorable to the Blacks, during the post Civil War period. Each section then chooses:

1. a newspaper reporter favorable to its position
2. a Congressman recently elected to office during Reconstruction

Then each section meets separately to discuss appropriate questions for its reporter. Areas to be explored should deal with the future of the South under Reconstruction, what each wishes to accomplish for its people, feelings about the issues in the Civil War and what each Congressman believes should be done. After picking the best 10 questions, each group designates someone to write them down.

When both sides are ready, the reporters use their questions to interview the Congressman from the other group.

LAND AND FREEDOM

16. IMPERIALISM IN CENTRAL AMERICA

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: After the Spanish-American War, the United States embarked upon an active policy of imperialism in Central America.

Sub-Theme: The Central American nations became the focal point of economic imperialism by American corporations.

Concepts:
- "Banana Republics"
- dollar diplomacy
- imperialism
- land grants
- multinational corporation

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze an interpretation contrasting two views on imperialism
- evaluate a contract between a country and a company
- research a multinational corporation

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison Wesley, ch. 12
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 75
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 19
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 35
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 27
- These United States, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 18

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The foundation, a non-profit publisher, was incorporated in 1925 to help abolish poverty by keeping George's books in print and by disseminating his ideas. Books, pamphlets, and films by other authors are also published. In addition, the foundation helps finance the American Journal of Economics and Sociology and supports university and other group programs.

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IMPERIALISM IN CENTRAL AMERICA

As European countries furthered their economic penetration of Africa and Asia during the 19th century, the United States continued its westward expansion, extending its borders to the Pacific. While the United States had had an interest in the Western Hemisphere since the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, it was only after the Spanish-American War in 1898 that this nation became aware of the economic potential in Central American countries.

It was the introduction of the banana into the United States in 1870 that caused individuals and companies to recognize the potential of Central America. For economic, as well as political, reasons, President Theodore Roosevelt became interested in areas south of the border and instituted the "Big Stick" policy. President Taft subsequently, in stressing the area's economic importance, pursued a policy of "dollar diplomacy." With governmental approval, the stage was thus set for U.S. businesses to develop underdeveloped nations. And thus United Fruit, an example of one such corporation, made its mark in Central America, and soon established a monopoly in the banana trade.

Although not the only company to produce and trade in Central America, United Fruit was by far the strongest associated with "Yankee imperialism." From its inception in 1899—an amalgam of several other companies—it grew in such proportions that it accounted for 65% of banana exports to the United States before World War II. How this came about comprises a partial history of the "banana republics." It is a study of brilliant organization, multiplication of assets, accumulation of profits, initiative, and ability in establishing a market. Part of the company's success was due to its destructive tactics towards competition, its illegal activities and its political clout with local politicians.

But without control over natural resources, it is questionable how much of its success would have been possible. For United Fruit was a giant not only in the business of agriculture but also in the role of land owner.

United Fruit's growth in the banana republics went hand in hand with its acquisition of natural resources. In countries such as Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, and Cuba, the company became a vast land owner. In Honduras, United Fruit controlled over 400,000 acres, 40% obtained free due to grants. In country after country, this firm was a leading real estate holder, owning or leasing over three million acres before World War II. Control of these lands made United Fruit the most successful corporation in Central America.

Transporting bananas from the interiors of the jungles had to be done by the most modern, expeditious methods. It was important, therefore, that United Fruit get control of the railroads and also engage in railroad construction, through its various subsidiaries. As an inducement, local governments granted the company from 250 to 500 acres for each mile of railroad construction. United Fruit received alternate blocks of land, with each other section going to the people of the nation where track was being laid (similar to the railroad land grant system in the United States). However, since large areas are required for banana cultivation, the company had intermediaries lease the land back from native landholders. This enabled the company to obtain vast acreage with a minimum investment. United Fruit was thus able to use much of each nation's agricultural land and at the same time reap high profits for its stockholders.

Other American companies, too, gained control of natural resources and thus monopolized trade. This monopoly of land created an atmosphere where many landless peasants had little choice but to work for American companies. Controlling natural resources was an important step in monopolizing other stages of the banana trade, which United Fruit accomplished with maximum success.

IMPERIALISM IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Activity 1 – Analyzing Poetry about Imperialism

One of the most famous poems advocating that European nations imperialize undeveloped countries was "The White Man's Burden" by Rudyard Kipling:

Take up the white man's burden,
Send forth the best ye breed–
Go, bind your sons to exile,
To serve your captives' need.
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild–
Your new caught sullen peoples,
Half devil and half child.

"The Poor Man's Burden," a poem by Howard Taylor, was in answer to Kipling's:

Pile up the poor man's burden;
Keep in the old, old track!
Let glory ride, as ever,
Upon the toiler's back.
Lay tax and tax upon him,
Devised with subtle skill–
Call forth his sons to slaughter
And let him pay the bill!

After reading both poems, please answer the following questions:

1. Explain the meaning of the first poem.
2. Explain the meaning of the second poem.
3. How accurate is Kipling's version of the people that the Europeans would colonize?
4. In Taylor's version, to what extent is the success of the colonizer due to his ingenuity?
5. Would less developed nations have been better off if industrial nations had not colonized or imperialized them?
6. In the case of imperialism, does "might make right"?

IMPERIALISM IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Activity 2 – Analyzing A Contract

Below is an actual contract made between the government of Costa Rica and a private company towards the end of the 19th century.

> The Government grants to the company 800,000 acres of undeveloped national lands along the railroad line or in any other part of the country, to be selected by the company, with all the natural wealth which said areas contain and the strip of land for the right-of-way for the building of the railroad and the necessary structures; and all kinds of material necessary for the construction of the railroad which may be found in undeveloped national lands anywhere along the railroad; and two of the lots of national property now measured in the port of Limon, for the construction of wharves, warehouses and stations - all without reimbursement of any sort . . .
>
> The Government cannot lay taxes on said lands within twenty years, counting from the effective date of this concession—it being understood that upon expiration of this term of twenty years, lands that have not been cultivated or utilized in any other manner shall return to the Government without the latter having to make any indemnity payment of any sort.

After reading the above, please respond to the following questions:

1. Based upon the contract, what benefit did the Costa Rican government receive?
2. What were the benefits received by the company?
3. What are some of the reasons that the government may have entered into this contract?
4. Which party seemed to gain most from the contract? Why?
5. Check some recent newspaper articles. Has the United States entered any such agreements lately?
6. How important was railroad construction to the economy of Costa Rica?

Activity 3 – Researching A Multinational Corporation

During the latter part of the 19th century, the multinational corporation began to emerge, as demonstrated by the rise of United Fruit. Many were active in what is described as third world countries, opening up new markets.

After several world wars, this type of corporation has become more powerful and its economic positions more concentrated. Although the United States has more of such corporations (some of which are Anaconda Copper, Chase Manhattan Bank, Ford, Exxon, General Electric, General Motors, Mobil, Royal Dutch, and Sears Roebuck) than any other country, European and Japanese multinational firms also exert powerful economic influence.

Choose one multinational corporation (see Fortune magazine's directory of 500 leading corporations) and request information about it, including its latest annual report. Many of the firms have headquarters or offices in New York. Use the material to write a short report which includes answers to the following:

1. the corporation's major products
2. countries with which the company deals
3. tone of the annual report, especially concerning its impact upon countries with which it deals
4. any positive or negative comments read or heard about the company
5. evaluation of the effect this corporation has had upon some of the nations with which it is involved

LAND AND FREEDOM

17. THE CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Up until the end of the 19th century, the majority of the population of the United States resided on the frontier and in rural areas.

Sub-theme: Frederick Turner, historian, attributed America's democratic way of life to the existence of the frontier.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- frontier
- individualism
- Turner thesis
- westward movement
- economic equality

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze an interpretation concerning the growth of the United States
- write an essay on the pros and cons of individualism
- evaluate information in a folk song

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 7, 8
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 57
- A History of the American Republic, Laidlaw, ch. 13
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 17
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 24

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THE CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER

"Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement but at present the unsettled area had been so broken into by isolated bodies of settlement that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line."

From this census report emerged one of the most significant and controversial papers in America history – "The Frontier in America History," by Frederick Jackson Turner – commonly referred to as the Turner thesis.

Historians are constantly searching for connections–a cause and effect relationship. To understand the past and the factors that have been woven together to make the present – these are the challenges that beset the minds of great historians. Frederick Turner had often been puzzled when foreign visitors commented on the distinct traits of Americans. Was there an American character, and, equally important, what had transpired, over the centuries, in the development of that character? After considerable research, the answer became clearer and clearer. Yes, there was a distinct American character, shaped by our ever changing frontier. Because of our unlimited resources, the American was nurtured, educated and molded by the promise the frontier offered and by experiences there.

A changing frontier, it gradually moved westward, divorcing Americans more and more from the European way of life. The fall line marked the frontier of the 17th century; the Alleghanies that of the 18th century; the Mississippi that of the first quarter of the 19th; the Missouri that of the mid-19th century and the belt of the Rocky Mountains and the arid tract, the end of that century. Traders and trappers, farmers and cattlemen, miners and city builders–each successive wave used and ultimately conquered nature until, at last, the frontier disappeared. And, with each changing frontier, social development began anew, forming a dynamic and creative society.

The changing frontier shaped the American social and economic character and molded our historical, social, and economic development. That coarseness and strength combined with inquisitiveness, that practical mind, that masterful grasp of material things, that dominant spirit of individualism, the love of freedom–all these characteristics resulted from that frontier experience. As a people, we were molded not by our European heritage but by this unique experience, unequalled in history.

As long as there was ample free land, there was unlimited opportunity. For it was free land, according to Turner, that was the key to the economic growth of this country, and hence responsible for changing people's cultural traits. This relationship between land and societal development was recognized by others during this period, but it was Turner who masterfully assimilated facts to support this thesis. And now, at the end of the 19th century, the frontier was closed, and thus ended a significant chapter in the history of this nation and of the world.

As a result of the closing of the frontier, several significant changes occurred. As the availability of free land was basically exhausted, the Great West, as a factor in American development, diminished. This absence of free land no longer reinforced the frontier's democratic influences. Secondly, we entered a period of concentration–be it capital, as with monopolies and trusts–or labor, with unions and cooperation. Connected with both of these changes was an expansion beyond the continental limits of the United States –expansion that was both political and social. And lastly, according to Turner, it was the beginning of political parties in the United States which divided on issues that involved the question of socialism. As the old frontiers closed, America embarked on a new journey to new frontiers with that same spirit of individualism and democratic idealism.

At the core, part and parcel of that democratic spirit, was individualism.

The world was to be made a better world by the example in which there was freedom of the individual, in which there was the vitality and mobility productive of originality and variety.

THE CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER

Activity 1 – Analyzing an Interpretation

Frederick Jackson Turner, in The Frontier in American History, put forth a thesis which has met with an army of advocates, such as Woodrow Wilson, and a host of critics. From the passage below you may get a sense of his theory. In writing about the influences that formed Western democracy, he states:

> Most important of all has been the fact that an area of free land has continually lain on the western border of the settled area of the United States. Whenever social conditions tended to crystallize in the East, whenever capital tended to press on labor or political restraints to impede the freedom of the mass, there was this gate of escape to the free conditions of the frontier. These free lands promoted individualism, economic equality, freedom to rise, democracy. Men would not accept inferior wages and a permanent position of social subordination when this promised land of freedom and equality was theirs for the taking. Who would rest content under oppressive legislative conditions when by a slight effort he might reach a land wherein to become a co-worker in the building of free cities and free states on the lines of his own ideal? In a word, the free lands meant free opportunities. Their existence has differentiated the American democracy from the democracies which have preceded it, because ever, as democracy in the East took the form of highly specialized and complicated industrial society, in the West it kept in touch with primitive conditions, and by action and reaction these two forces have shaped our history.

After reading the above quotation from Turner's book, please answer the following:

1. Explain, in your own words, the heart of what is stated in the above paragraph.
2. From what you have studied in history, have free lands meant opportunities?
3. Explain to what degree our immigration movement was based upon a desire for land.
4. In what ways was free land conducive to the democratic spirit?
5. Explain how wages can be kept down once free land is no longer available.
6. Do you agree or disagree with the Turner thesis? Why?

THE CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER

Activity 2 – Writing an Essay on Individualism

One of the characteristics that Frederick Turner thought resulted from the frontier was individualism–the feeling that each person was responsible for her or his own future. He felt this was an admirable characteristic.

Below are two views on individualism–one written before the closing of the frontier, in 1840, by Henry David Thoreau, and the other several decades after the frontier no longer existed, at the beginning of the Great Depression of the 1930's, by Horace Kallen.

After reading both excerpts, choose the one you most agree with and write two paragraphs: 1) why you agree and 2) why you disagree with the other.

Henry David Thoreau:

I heartily accept the motto–That government is best which governs least–and I should like to see it acted up to more readily. . . Government never of itself furthered any enterprise, it does not keep the country free. It does not settle the West. It does not educate. The character inherent in the American People has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more if the government had not sometimes got in its way.

Horace Kallen:

Within three years the application of this "rugged individualism" increased the number of unemployed by millions, brought starvation to the doors of the American masses and caused the failure of nearly three thousand banks. "Rugged Individualism" prevented the public "dole" but thrust millions of self-respecting citizens upon private charity . . . It prevented the spending of public money on public works as a remedy for unemployment, but sought to endure against more bank failures by appropriating a colossal sum money to be distributed to banks as they needed it.

Activity 3 – Using Folk Songs in Understanding an Era

For many city dwellers, the life of the frontier has been glamorized in our movies and on television. However, for many, particularly the cowboy–the mainstay of the western movement–life was lonely and isolated. He was by himself on the endless plains, spending eight to ten hours a day in the saddle. Below are the words to a song popular with cowboys during the closing days of the frontier:

I'm a poor lonesome cowboy
I'm a poor lonesome cowboy
I'm a poor lonesome cowboy
And a long way from home.

I ain't got no father
To buy the clothes I wear.
I ain't got no mother
To mend the clothes I wear.
I ain't got no brother
To drive the steers with me.
I ain't got no sweetheart
To sit and talk with me.
I'm a poor lonesome cowboy.

After reading the song, please answer the following questions:

1. Why do you think this song was popular with the cowboys?
2. What other groups experienced, during this period, the same type of loneliness?
3. What are some of the characteristics developed by the frontier cowboys?
4. How do these American characteristics differ from today's average American?
5. Why did people move westward, away from the comforts of city living?
6. Do we still have frontiers today in this world? Explain.

LAND AND FREEDOM

18. THE REFORM PERIOD AND HENRY GEORGE

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: The reform period during the 1880-90's was a reaction to some of the abuses of industrialization.

Sub-theme: Henry George, during the reform period, was a leading advocate for land reform.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- Reform Period
- Populists
- Single Tax
- Social Darwinism
- Progress and Poverty

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze a reading about the cause of poverty
- make inferences from a cartoon
- analyze a bar graph on corporate land ownership

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison Wesley, ch. 10
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 20
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 60
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 17
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 28
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 22

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THE REFORM PERIOD AND HENRY GEORGE

It was a period of political corruption—both on a national level and perhaps even more so locally. Bribery in government was common during the 1870's and 80's. Business consolidation, monopolies and trusts were rampant, as financial wizards and industrial giants gained a stranglehold on the American economy. One per cent of the population owned more than 99% of the nation's wealth. And the most recent depression, beginning in 1873 and lasting for several years, had accentuated the gulf between rich and poor. It was in this setting that the reform movement was born.

Reformers of this era reacted to the political corruption and concentration of wealth by advocating such solutions as socialism, laws controlling business, more powerful labor unions, anarchy, more humanitarian efforts, religion, and others. It was a time of political action. The Populist party took root and the advent of Progressivism was only years away. Emerging from this period was Henry George, whose analysis differed from the mainstream solutions.

In 1879, Henry George wrote Progress and Poverty, a book based upon an inquiry into the cause of depressions and of increased poverty during periods of increased wealth. The book's initial impact was significant. Tens of thousands of workers read it. Unions, especially the Knights of Labor (the strongest combination at that time), were strongly influenced by the book's message. George was the forerunner of many to follow who felt that was the environment, and not hereditary factors, that was responsible for humanity's economic ills. Social Darwinism, a popular theory of the period, held that the rich are successful because it is simply in the nature of things; it is the law of the jungle. Legislation cannot change such a law of nature, such theorists believed, for that will upset what nature has mandated.

George refuted this view, holding that it is the environment and society's institutions that are responsible for poverty, with the institution of land ownership being at the very heart of poverty.

Land—all the natural resources—is the warehouse of all potential wealth. No wealth can be produced, then, unless one has access to land. But, according to George, land has been monopolized by the few, while the many, the great majority, are forced to pay the few for the use of that land. Vast acreage is held out of use for speculative purposes; landowners wait until the price rises. The result? Most of the population, not having access to land, is forced into crowded quarters, having to compete with each other to earn a bare living. It was George's belief that land monopoly was the basis of most other monopolies. His solution? Treat the causes and not the effects.

Taxing land values with a "Single Tax" would have the result of loosening the economic shackles imposed by land owners, many of whom are industrialists. Natural resources would become available to all. By instituting such a tax, profits would be removed from the mere ownership of land and would make available all land which had been held out of use for speculation. As more land was made available, and as taxes were removed from both labor and capital, the incentive to produce would be encouraged and workers would no longer be limited in their opportunities. As more land and natural resources became available as a result of this single tax on the value of land, it would, of course, mean that more jobs would be created to develop the resources, without punitive taxes on payrolls and development.

Since Henry George advocated a structural change in our relationship with natural resources, his reform ran counter to that of others, who advocated governmental intervention. George felt that our ways of approaching land ownership were the cause of poverty, that other actions that did not deal with this problem would not solve the dilemma.

Progress and Poverty had catapulted George into the limelight. He emerged one of the most influential of the reformers. His voice became a most rounded and powerful note in a growing chorus of reformers who followed. Politicians, economists, scientists—leaders from all fields—were influenced by his analysis of poverty and its relationship to progress.

THE REFORM PERIOD AND HENRY GEORGE

Activity 1 – Analyzing One Approach to the Cause of Poverty

In 1879 Henry George wrote a best-selling book on economics entitled Progress and Poverty. Within several years, it made a significant impact during this period—a period marked with countless reformers writing and speaking about how to cure the ills of industrialization. His main emphasis was on the use of land—that all, and not a privileged few, should have access to all our natural resources. Below is an excerpt from his book:

> The poverty which in the midst of abundance pinches and embrutes men, and all the manifold evils which flow from it, spring from a denial of justice. In permitting the monopolization of the opportunities which nature freely offers to a_ ve have ignored the fundamental law of justice—for, so far as we can see, when we view things upon a large ale, justice seems to be the supreme law of the universe. But by sweeping away this injustice and asserting the rights of all men to natural opportunities, we shall conform ourselves to the law—we shall remove the great cause of unnatural inequality in the distribution of wealth and power; we shall abolish poverty; tame the ruthless passions of greed; dry up the springs of vice and misery; light in dark places the lamp of knowledge; give new vigor to invention and a fresh impulse to discovery; substitute political strength for political weakness; and make tyranny and anarchy impossible.

After reading the above excerpt from Henry George's Progress and Poverty, please answer the following questions:

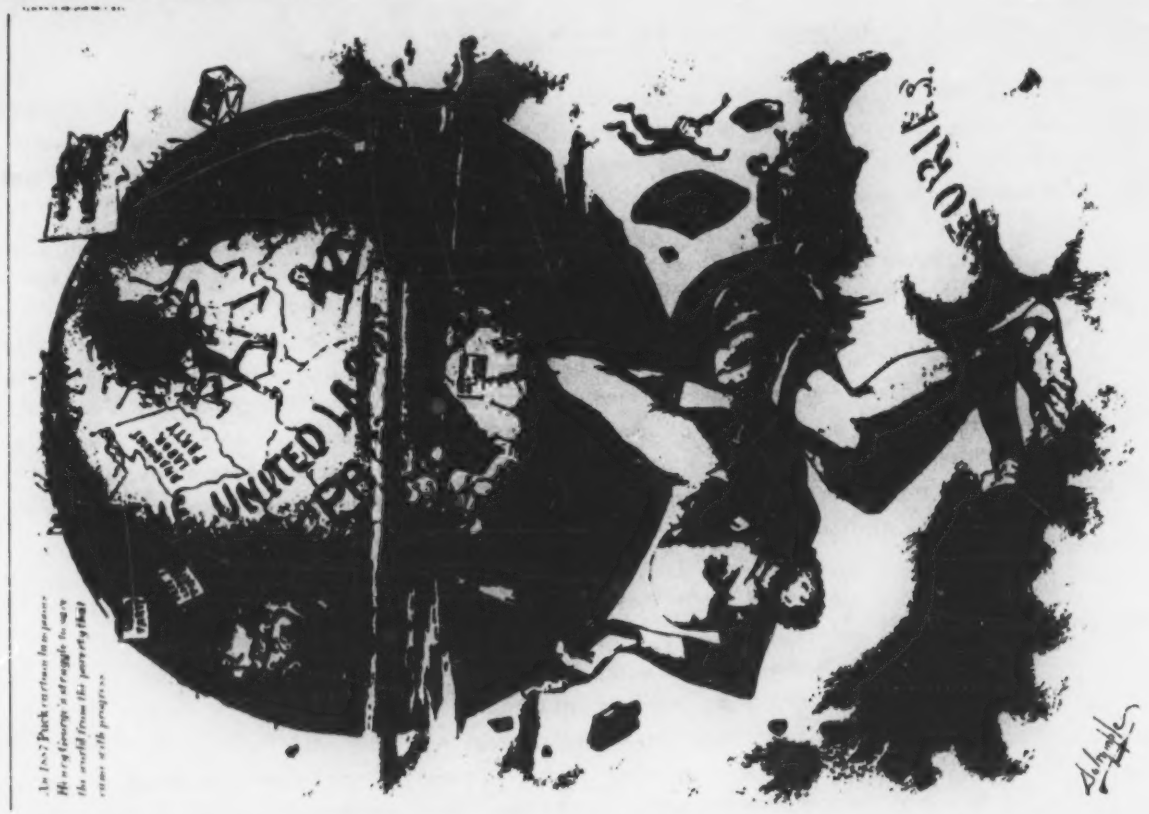
1. What does George consider to be the prime cause of poverty?
2. What do you think George means by justice?
3. What is meant by the term "distribution of wealth"?
4. Evaluate the above selection from Progress and Poverty, telling why you agree or disagree with it.
5. To what degree is the monopolization of land a problem throughout the world?
6. Why do you feel, based upon the above excerpt only, that Henry George had appeal during this period?
7. Is it possible for humanity to abolish poverty? Explain your answer.

Activity 2 – Reading A Cartoon

During the 1880's, when Henry George was at the height of his career, newspapers and magazines featured articles and cartoons dealing with his reforms. One such cartoon during that period is reproduced here. After studying it please answer the following questions:

1. What do you think is a good title for the cartoon?
2. What is its meaning?
3. Based upon details of the cartoon, what do you think the cartoonist feels are the causes of poverty?
4. What is the significance of "Theories" near the bottom of the picture?
5. Have we come closer, since the days of Henry George, to solving the problems of poverty?
6. How accurate was George's analysis that treatment of land was at the heart of our economic ills?

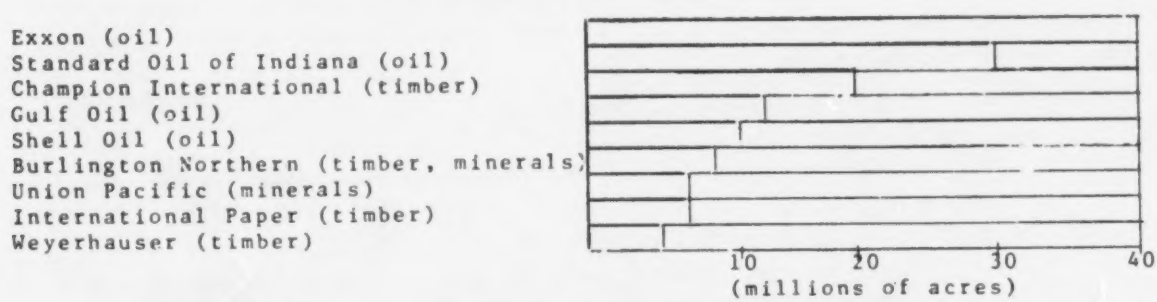
Activity 2 – Reading A Cartoon (Continued)



Activity 3 – Reading A Bar Graph on Corporate Landholdings

Henry George wrote about the monopolization of land in general terms. However, the graph below details some corporations in this country which own vast amounts of land. Study the graph and then answer the questions which follow.

CORPORATE AMERICAN LANDHOLDING



1. What are the natural resources with which the above corporations are involved?
2. Fortune magazine lists each year the "500"—those corporations that are the largest in sales in this country. How many of the above are in the "500"? Can you draw any conclusions?
3. What are the major industries that are dependent on the above natural resources?
4. What natural resources are not included in the above?
5. Winston Churchill, wartime leader of England, stated, "Land monopoly. . .is the mother of all. . . monopoly." How accurate was he?

LAND AND FREEDOM

19. ROOSEVELT, THE DEFICIT AND THE NEW DEAL

This is a series of self-contained lessons in land use, with activities as highlights, which can be used with any high school American studies classroom instruction. Each lesson is cross-referenced to major textbooks. Pages may be reproduced.

Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Deficit spending has been the policy of many administrations during our history.

Sub-theme: Under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the nature of deficit spending changed.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- deficit spending
- New Deal
- Great Depression
- fiscal policy
- business cycle

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- analyze an opinion concerning national debt
- read a graph on the national debt
- compare and make judgments on personal versus national debt

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 15
- Building the United States, Harcourt Brace, ch. 86-88
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 25
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 25
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 43
- The United States, Prentice Hall, ch. 32

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ROOSEVELT, THE DEFICIT AND THE NEW DEAL

Deficit—when more is spent than is taken in—has long been a government policy. Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of Treasury under President Washington, promoted the policy of incurring debts, as a method of establishing sound credit policy. And so it was the case in many succeeding administrations. However, debts were incurred mainly as a result of wars—not the result of attempting to ameliorate a downturn in the business cycle. As a result of the Great Depression, however, a new era was ushered in—an era in which fiscal policy included an unbalanced budget due to government programs aimed at lessening the effects of the depression.

In campaigning for the presidency in 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt promised the American public that a balanced budget would be maintained. In fact, during all his years in the White House, prior to our buildup for World War II, a balanced budget was uppermost in his mind. Philosophically, he was against the government's going further into debt, but, in order to support his many relief programs, it was necessary, according to his administration, to overspend. As program after program was passed—programs that would cost taxpayers billions of dollars—the choices were increased: taxes or government borrowing. And so it happened that, to give the American people a "New Deal," it was necessary to have an unbalanced budget.

When he first took over the presidency, Roosevelt had the backing of many segments of society—not only the general public but bankers and businessmen. For the depression affected all. Business was hurt badly and borrowing as an alternative to higher taxes became more acceptable to the business community. Such was the attitude until 1936, when bankers and businessmen began to change their views. As recovery began to take effect, the need for a deficit was not a necessity.

Even though he did not favor greater debt, Roosevelt had his priorities. Convinced that deficits were temporary and not a permanent fact of fiscal life, he was exultant about the pump-priming consequences of spending. In his budget message of 1936 he stated:

> Our policy is succeeding. The figures prove it. Secure in the knowledge that steadily decreasing deficits will turn in time into steadily increasing surpluses, and that it is the deficit of today which is making possible the surplus of tomorrow, let us pursue the course we have mapped.

As unemployment decreased during those early years of pump-priming, there seemed to be some cause for jubilation in President Roosevelt's optimism. Then, one year after his second inauguration, unemployment began to rise. Why, in spite of this pump-priming, was there a recession within a depression? The pump was not running; prosperity generated by deficits had not survived the withdrawal of the stimulus. Were deficits to become a permanent part of government policy?

Looking back upon those deficit days of the New Deal, it is well to note that the average yearly debt incurred by the federal government was about three billion dollars. What may seem like a miniscule amount of today's standards was significant when compared to the budget, which averaged between six and nine billion dollars. Starting out as a temporary means to combat the depression of the 1930's, and reaching the accumulated figure in 1935 of 35 billion dollars, it has today far exceeded one trillion dollars.

ROOSEVELT, THE DEFICIT AND THE NEW DEAL

Activity 1 – Analyzing An Opinion of the National Debt

Henry George, in his book Social Problems, wrote the following about public debts, decades before they represented an important issue in economics:

> When we talk about calling upon future generations to do their part in the costs and burdens of the present, imposing upon them a share in expenditures we take the liberty of assuming they will consider to have been made for their benefit as well as for ours, we are carrying a metaphor into absurdity. Public debts are not a device for borrowing from the future, for compelling those yet to be to bear a share in the expenses which a present generation may choose to incur. That is, of course, a physical impossibility. They are merely a device for obtaining control of wealth in the present by promising that a certain distribution of wealth in the future shall be made—a device by which the owners of existing wealth are induced to give it up under promise, not merely that other people shall be taxed to pay them, but that other people's children shall be taxed of their children. . .Those who get control of governments are thus enabled to get sums which they could not get by immediate taxation without arousing the indignation and resistance of those who could make the most effective resistance.

After reading the above selection, please answer the following questions:

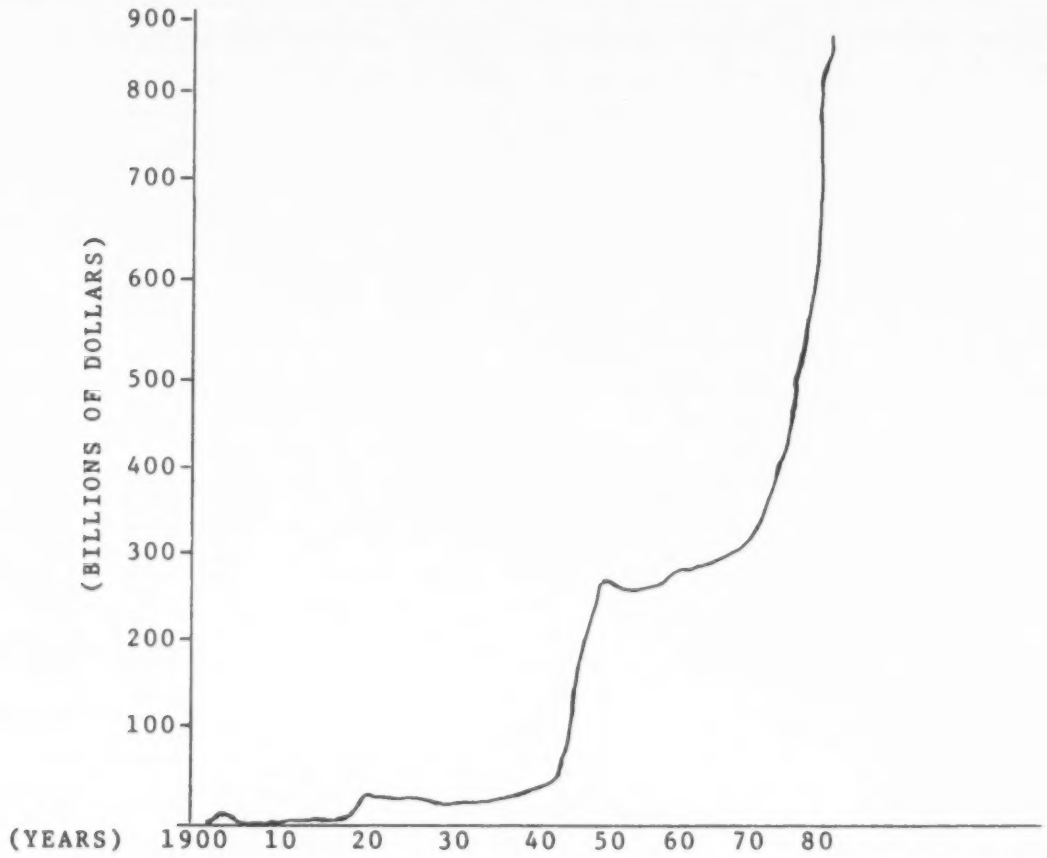
1. What does George mean about the impossibility of borrowing from the future?
2. Why is the author against public debt?
3. What are the reasons that people, banks or corporations lend the government money?
4. Why, according to the author, do governments not use taxation instead of going into debt?
5. Evaluate the arguments that have been given in this selection.
6. Does this present generation have a right to cause future generations to pay off the debt?
7. What are some of the arguments that can be given for a national debt?

ROOSEVELT, THE DEFICIT AND THE NEW DEAL

Activity 2 – Reading A Line Graph on the National Debt

Below is a line graph detailing the national debt from the beginning of the century to the present. After studying this graph, please answer the following questions:

1. What factors accounted for the steep incline during the 40's?
2. Extend the graph for the period after 1980.
3. What other information do you think is necessary in order to better evaluate our getting deeper into debt?
4. During the 1930's, deficit spending was the order of the day. Could the programs of the New Deal have been accomplished without going into debt? Explain.
5. Is the national debt too big? Explain.



Activity 3 – Making Judgments about Debt

Below are parallel questions on a) personal debt and b) national debt. Answer each question in a sentence or two.

DEBT

Personal	National
What results from your going into debt?	What are the consequences for the nation of going into debt?
Is going into debt helpful or harmful?	Is going into debt helpful or harmful?
How does it affect the way you relate to others?	How does debt affect our nation's values and actions?
Are you for or against going into debt?	Are you for or against national debt?
What segments in society encourage debt?	Which sections gain and which lose from a national debt?

After you have expressed your judgments, compare your attitudes on personal debt with your attitudes on national debt.

LAND AND FREEDOM

20. LAND—OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE

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Author: Stan Rubenstein, M.A.; Teacher, Oceanside, N.Y. High School
Consultant on history: Harvey Snitiker, M.A.

Theme: Many factors have contributed to the growth and prosperity of the United States.

Sub-theme: Land has been a major contributing factor to our growth.

Background: See next page.

Concepts:
- land
- land monopolization
- environmentalists
- sectional differences
- governmental ownership of land

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:
- evaluate an interpretation of the importance of land
- analyze a table on United States land acquisitions
- write an essay on the importance of land

Related Texts:
- American Experience, Addison-Wesley, ch. 7
- A History of the United States, American Book, ch. 1
- A History of the United States, Ginn, ch. 3
- Making of Modern America, Houghton Mifflin, ch. 2
- Our American Heritage, Silver Burdett, ch. 1

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The foundation, a non-profit publisher, was incorporated in 1925 to help abolish poverty by keeping George's books in print and by disseminating his ideas. Books, pamphlets, and films by other authors are also published. In addition, the foundation helps finance the American Journal of Economics and Sociology and supports university and other group programs.

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121 East 30th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016
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LAND–OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE

"Plenty of good land, and liberty to manage their own affairs in their own way, seem to be the two great causes of the prosperity of all new colonies." Adam Smith, author of The Wealth of Nations, recognized what was to be an important factor influencing our course of history. For, without the abundance of land in the New World and various government policies for its management, not only would our history be different, but so would be the history of the world.

Since the first days of colonization, when trading companies controlled the parcelling out of land, to the transition to proprietary colonies, and then direct control by the king, land has been an integral part of our way of life. Its control and use determined the role settlers would play, the type of economy, and the type of government that would eventually evolve. From the rocky soil in New England, to the favorable coastline in the middle states, to the fertile plantations in the South, all would affect its economy, its customs, its traditions and its attitudes. The story of the United States is recorded in the millions of acres discovered by the early settlers and subsequently settled by countless pioneers and immigrants moving westward.

How did various Americans view the treatment of this vast continent? Should it be sold to speculators, as often happened, or given to railroad companies, as happened with 94 million acres, or granted to homesteaders, as was the case with 287 million acres? Should the United States government control and own land (as is the case with one third of all the land in the United States) or should much of this land be leased or turned over to private industry, as suggested by the Reagan Administration? What have been the views of some past presidents?

Abraham Lincoln:

> The land, the earth God gave to man for his home, sustenance and support should never be the possession of any man, corporation, society or unfriendly government, any more than the air or water, is as much. An individual, or company, or enterprise requiring land should hold no more than is required for their home and sustenance, and never more than they have in actual use in the prudent management of their legitimate business, and this much should not be permitted when it creates an exclusive monopoly.

Thomas Jefferson:

> The earth belongs in usufruct to the living. Whenever there are in any country uncultivated lands and unemployed poor, it is clear that the laws of property have so far been extended as to violate natural right. The earth is given as a common stock for men to labor and live on.

And there were those presidents who believed in some of the ideas of Henry George, noted 19th century economist and social reformer, who advocated taxes on land value as a means to bring more land into use and limit its monopolization.

Theodore Roosevelt:

> The burden of municipal taxation should be so shifted as to put the weight of taxation upon the unearned rise in the value of land itself, rather than upon the improvements.

Woodrow Wilson:

> This country needs a new and sincere thought in politics, coherently, distinctly and boldly uttered by men who are sure of their ground. The power of men like Henry George seems to me to mean that.

Be it presidents, historians, environmentalists, philosophers or social reformers, it is becoming more accepted that land has played and will continue to play a vital role in our history. Our planet is limited and the manner in which people have access to this domain may well determine our prosperity or lack of it.

LAND–OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE

Activity 1 – Evaluating an Interpretation of the Importance of Land

In Land Tenure and Land Taxation in America, Aaron Sakolski summarizes the place he feels that land deserves in our history:

> . . . the study of the land question assumes a paramount importance in solving the ever-recurring problems of human welfare. That the land problem has been only less serious in the United States than in most other countries of the world is due not only to the fact that our nation is still comparatively young but also to the fact that until more recent years it was blessed with an abundance of practically unhabited land area . . . . . The country, however, is now thoroughly populated. "Free land" is at an end. Large areas are engrossed in private ownership. The history of this process, including an understanding of the "regard" for land and the evolution of the institution of landownership and use, in the United States, therefore, is worthy of study, if for no other reason than that it forms a basis for future trends and may give indications of the need for a new quest for economic justice.

After reading the above interpretation, please answer these questions:;

1. Summarize the main point that the author is making about land.

2. Why has the land problem been less serious in the United States than other countries?

3. What does the author mean by the "regard" for land?

4. Why does the author believe it is important to study a history of land?

5. What types of ownership of land do we have in the United States?

6. Based upon the above reading, what do you speculate is his main criticism?

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Activity 2— Analyzing A Table on U.S. Land Acquisitions

Below is a table dealing with the major acquisitions of land in the United States.

Date	Acquisition	Land Area in Acres	Cost in Thousands of Dollars	Price per Acre
1781-1802	State cessions	236,826	6,200	0 and .11
1789-1850	Indian treaties	450,000	90,000	.20
1803	Louisiana Purchase	520,912	23,214	.04
1819	Florida Red River Basin	75,747	6,674	.14
1846	Oregon Compromise	183,386	–	–
1848	Mexican Cession	338,681	16,295	.05
1850	Purchase from Texas	78,927	15,496	.20
1853	Gadsden Purchase	18,989	10,000	.53
1867	Alaska Purchase	375,304	7,200	.02

After studying the table, please answer the following questions:

1. Which acquisition was the largest in terms of area?
2. Which areas did the United States obtain as the result of a war?
3. Of all the areas purchased, which do you think had the least value to us at the time of purchase? Why?
4. Which of the acquisitions is still being debated and a subject of suits in our courts? Cite examples.
5. Obtain a map of the United States and indicate or locate as many of the acquisitions as you can.
6. Use any locations in the country, even your own home, and estimate the present cost of land.
7. What are the various countries that were involved with these purchases of land?

Activity 3 — Writing Essays Showing the Importance of Land in Our History

Throughout the pages of American history, there are countless examples of the importance that land has played in our lives. Have the students choose one of the following issues or one that may be very recent and have them write an essay on this subject. Much of the information can be obtained from textbooks, although some may wish to use issues which are more recent.

Included in the essay should be the background to the event, the essence of the event and its long-range importance to this country. If the subject lends itself to controversy, then students may include their opinions along with their reasons. Some suggested topics are:

The Land Ordinances of 1785
Homestead Act of 1862
Railroad land grants
Indian concept of land ownership
Land speculation and the Panic of 1837
Morrill Act of 1862 and land grant colleges
Turner thesis and the frontier
Theodore Roosevelt and the conservation movement
Henry George and the Single Tax

Reproduce the best essays so that the class may read and discuss them.